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Thos. Nunn.

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To face the Title.

STONEHENGE IN ITS PERFECT STATE.

According to Inigo Jones and Webb.

Thos. Nunn.

MONUMENTA ANTIQUA;

OR THE

Stone Monuments of Antiquity

YET REMAINING IN THE BRITISH ISLES,

PARTICULARLY AS ILLUSTRATED BY

Scripture.

ALSO A DISSERTATION ON

STONEHENGE:

TOGETHER WITH A

COMPENDIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE DRUIDS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

CONJECTURES ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN

OF THE

PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT,

AND OF THE

ROUND TOWERS OF IRELAND.

BY R. WEAVER,

AUTHOR OF "SCRIPTURE FULFILLED," "THE PAGAN ALTAR AND JEHOVAH'S TEMPLE," &c.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY J. B. NICHOLS AND SON, PARLIAMENT STREET; AND T. WARD AND CO. PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCXL.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. B. NICHOLS AND SON,
25, PARLIAMENT STREET.

PREFACE.

To the lover of antiquity, how interesting is any thing that presents to his imagination scenes and transactions of past ages! Hence the pleasure enjoyed at the sight of an ancient ruin—an ancient castle, for instance. And why such pleasurable feeling? Imagination presents to his view certain individuals as having distinguished themselves on that very spot—battles fought and won there—and indeed a variety of important events, recorded in history as having there occurred. And pained as he may be, if a man of religious feeling, upon reflecting on the dominion of irregular appetites and passions in many of those occurrences, yet he cannot but feel himself interested. To the same source may be attributed

the delight of the classic traveller, when viewing the ancient remains of Greece and Rome. But why indulge this taste for antiquity about things recorded in profane history only? Why should not the lover of his Bible be allowed to indulge *his* taste in things that remind him of sacred history, especially if he thinks that the research it occasions will illustrate and confirm, as well as augment his esteem for, that most ancient and inspired Record? Suppose, for instance, he sees a circle of huge unhewn stones, placed on an extended plain or moor, which tradition tells him was once a heathen place of worship; or suppose a huge pillar or obelisk attracts his attention, which also, tradition says, was once an object of idolatrous regard, why may he not in his thoughts trace the origin of such artificial structures up to the remoter periods of time? And if he can find certain Scripture facts that have given rise to such an existing monument of antiquity, ought it to excite surprise that he should feel interested? And if, further, he conjectures that, in these times

of infidelity, the discovery should serve to illustrate and confirm the sacred records, is he not warranted in pursuing his researches? See, then, the origin of this undertaking. The writer considers the Bible as a revelation from Him "of whom are all things," and "through whom and to whom are all things;" he considers it as a book whose tendency is to pacify the conscience of man as a responsible and guilty creature, to deliver him from that iniquity which proves his ruin; to impart health to the mind, to solace the heart under the troubles of life, and even to extract the sting of death itself. And in viewing it thus, can he feel uninterested in *anything* that tends to strengthen his own or others' faith in such revelation; or that might tend to illustrate or exhibit its utility? Assuredly not. Now such are the author's views concerning the subject before us. It appears to him that there are many monuments of antiquity now existing, which derived their origin from certain facts that occurred thousands of years ago, as recorded in

Scripture, and he thinks that the accordance of existing facts with historic record in such cases, has a tendency to produce the effects above mentioned. Nor is this all: it appears to him, that, although notice has been taken by other writers, incidentally, of the probability that one or two of those remains of antiquity concerning which we are about to treat had their origin in certain Scripture facts, yet he is not aware that the matter has been taken into such matured consideration as is attempted in these Essays. Moreover, it will be allowed, that something may have escaped the observation of one which might have been noticed by another.

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P. 7, line 6, *for* λιπαριωνλιθων, *read* λιπαρωνλιθων.
— 19, last line of text, *for* haws, or hows, *read* laws, or lows.
— 20, line 4 from bottom, *for* acervi, *read* acervis.
— 26, line 7, *for* בזל, *read* בזל.
— 43, line 14, *for* Shem, *read* Shen.
— 67, line 9, *for* una, *read* uno.
— 69, line last, *for* the Appendix, *read* p. 188 et seq.
— 74, lines 10 and 27, *for* Leer, *read* Leen.
— 133, line 25, *after* expression, *insert* in the margin.
— 157, line last but 2, *for* Dreuir, *read* Dreuin.

AN ESSAY

ON

CERTAIN STONE MONUMENTS OF ANTIQUITY FOUND IN THE BRITISH ISLES, &c.

CHAPTER I.

A DISSERTATION, SHEWING THAT SOME OF THE MONUMENTS HAD THEIR ORIGIN IN JACOB'S TIME.

When the venerable Jacob was about to bid adieu to his family, as well as to all earthly things, calling for his son Joseph, he addresses him thus: "God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz—the place afterwards called 'Bethel'—in the land of Canaan, and blessed me," &c. Of this important epoch in the life of the patriarch, the sacred historian gives us an account in a preceding chapter.* There we find that, in his journey from Beersheba to Haran, "he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to

* Gen. xxviii.

heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending, and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee, and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on; so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of

all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee." The whole passage is so interesting, as well as connected with our subject, that we could not curtail it. Now, who would have supposed that this event, so sacred, so held in reverential remembrance by the pious descendants of Jacob, should have become the innocent occasion of stone idolatrous worship? Yet it appears to have been so, and alone presents us with a satisfactory idea of the origin of those remains of stone antiquities that we learn have been connected with idolatry, and which have so much attracted the attention of the antiquary. We conceive that they took their rise from a particular circumstance mentioned in this narrative; that of Jacob's placing the stone on which he lay, and on which in his sleep he beheld the vision of the Almighty, as a sacred pillar, around which he and his household were hereafter to meet for the worship of God. And if we connect with this circumstance that when, after Jacob's return from Padan-aram, God appeared to him again, and that he "set up another pillar in the place where the Almighty thus appeared, pouring not only oil thereon but a drink-offering," the evidence will be still stronger—in connexion with that which will be hereafter adduced—that it was from this particular circumstance of the "pillar" of stone being raised as a Bethel, a house of God, that stone idolatry originated. The sacred vision and manifestation of the divine pre-

sence inspired Jacob, not less with gratitude than with holy dread; and therefore he "rose up early in the morning," it is said, "and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel," which signifies a house of God, as he afterwards explains it himself. "This stone which I have set for a pillar," says he, "shall be God's house;" that is, "here I and my household on my return will meet together for the worship of God." And God affixed his seal to this transaction, by afterwards saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar."

To make it sacred, he *poured oil* upon the top of it, or, as the inspired historian expresses it, he "anointed the pillar." This is the first time that we read of the pouring out of oil or anointing for a sacred use; we cannot therefore explain the ceremony from any preceding part of the sacred history, but must look to some of its subsequent parts; and thence we shall find that anointing with oil, both as to persons and things, was a holy rite, frequently occurring in matters of worship. And, by the light of the New Testament, we shall discover, that it was designed to be significant of that "love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit," which sheds its fragrancy, as the anointing oil of the Jewish priests did throughout the temple, over all the affections of the soul, and

is the life of all religious worship. Nor was this all: the ceremonial, at least on the second divine appearance, when, besides the pouring the oil, Jacob poured a *drink offering* on the pillar, must be significant. And, if the one was significant, so was doubtless the other; and, guided by subsequent scripture, as before, we may conjecture that this was designed to signify the *cheering* nature of this worship. Whether, however, we are right in our explanation of the ceremonial here observed or not, the great point is certain, that the stone pillar was to be considered as marking a sacred spot, and that it was a spot dedicated for the worship of God. Accordingly, when Jacob appeared somewhat tardy about fulfilling his vow, we find sometime afterwards that God said unto Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." And Jacob went with his household, or, as it is said, "all the *people* that were with him." And he built there an altar,* and called the place "El-beth-el," which signifies "the God of Bethel."

Now this stone that Jacob set up, say the Jews,

* Worthy of remark it is, that sacred as this place was, there must be an altar of sacrifice erected; teaching us that there is no intercourse with God but in virtue of the sacrifice of Christ. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Job, Moses, Israel, all first-built altars.

the Phœnicians, who inhabited the adjacent country, afterwards worshipped;* and they consecrated other stones with the like unction, and called them Βαιτυλοι or Βαιτυλια, in accordance with that erected at Bethel. Other nations it seems followed their example. And here we shall take leave to adduce the testimony of Bishop Lowth on the subject. "Of the worship of rude stones consecrated, there are many testimonies of the ancients. These were called Βαιτυλοι and Βαιτυλια; probably, from the stone which Jacob erected at Bethel, pouring oil upon the top of it." "The practice," says Bishop Lowth, "was very common in different ages and places. Arnobius, lib. i. gives an account of his own practice in this respect: 'Si quando conspexeram lubricatum lapidem, et ex olivi unguine sordidatum; tanquam inesset vis præsens, adulabar, affabar, et beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de trunco.'† Clemens

* The tendency of the human mind thus to render sacred objects that have been merely signs of good, or instrumental for good, may be seen in the fact, that the children of Israel, instructed as they were, actually burnt incense to the brazen serpent that Moses erected in the wilderness; and continued to do so for a long time. If so, need we wonder that the uninstructed Phœnicians should hold sacred the stone or pillar above mentmentioned? 2 Kings, xxiii. 4. The veneration for relics arises from the same source.

† Lowth, on Isa. lvii. 6. But as he has not translated the Latin quotation, we will give it here:—"If at any time I beheld an anointed stone, as if there had been a power inherent in it, I

Alex. Strom. lib. vii. speaks of a worshipper of every smooth stone in a proverbial way, to denote one given up to superstition. And, accordingly, Theophrastus has marked this as one strong feature in the character of the superstitious man:— *Και των λιπαριωνλιθων των εν ταις τριοδοις παριων, εκ της ληκυθου ελαιον κατεχειν, και επι γονατα πεσων και προσκυνησας απαλλαττεθαι.* "Passing by the anointed stones in the streets, he takes out his phial of oil, and pours it on them; and having fallen on his knees, and made his adorations, he departs." Since, then, it appears that the custom obtained among the nations to anoint stones, and, thus anointed, to make them objects of worship; since, also, they called them by a name so obviously derived from the word "Bethel," it is easy to conceive that the custom originated in this transaction at Bethel, especially as the Phœnicians are said by the Jews themselves to have adopted it from thence. And these Phœnicians, it must be observed, were not only a neighbouring people to the posterity of Jacob, but they had intercourse with all other nations. And, then, if we shall hereafter make it appear, that *these Phœnicians not only had commercial intercourse with the British Isles, where these stone monuments so much abound, but that they made settlements here,* the connexion and origination will more fully appear.

made my obeisance to it. I addressed myself to it, and requested benefits of it, not at all considering it as a stock."

Nor need we wonder that so sacred and interesting a fact should be thus perverted and corrupted, if we consider the corrupt tendencies of the human mind, as manifested in all history. Nay, even among the Jews, favoured as they were with a divine revelation, this very Bethel, in the time of Jacob so sacred a spot, as appropriated to the worship of the true God, became, at length, the great seat of a most abominable idolatry. The wicked Jeroboam, king of Israel, taking advantage of the veneration in which this place was held by the children of Israel, set up one of his idolatrous calves there, to be thenceforward the object of Israel's worship. And, so infatuated at length did Israel become by this idolatry, that they were most severely reproved for it by the prophets, and at length it occasioned their ruin as a kingdom. "I will also visit the altars of Bethel, and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground," says the Lord, by Amos:* and tauntingly upbraiding them for their mad adherence to such idolatrous practices, he says, by the same prophet, "Come to Bethel and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression" (which conduct at Gilgal, by the way, supplies us with another instance of perversion and abuse †), "and bring

* Amos, iii. 14.

† Gilgal was the place where the twelve stones were pitched as a memorial of their passing through Jordan, and there Saul was inaugurated as king—but now it was an idolatrous place.

your sacrifices every morning . . . . for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God." Yes, and though this Bethel was their confidence, it wofully failed them, as all idolatrous confidences of men ultimately will; for, says Jeremiah, "the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel their confidence," * its god not helping them in the day of their trouble, when this "sinful kingdom," according to the prophecy of Amos, was "destroyed from off the face of the earth." Thus, taking a view of the conduct of even Israel, we cease to wonder that the heathen should so pervert and abuse an institution so sacred.

To the remarks above made on stone idolatrous *worship* we might also add, that, as the origination of stone worship might be traced to facts occurring in Jacob's history, so might the origination of stone *monuments* and *boundaries*. As to *monuments*, or memorials of the dead, we are told, that when Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, died, that "he set up a pillar upon her grave;" and, adds the historian, "that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." † Nor was it existing then only; for in Saul's time, near 700 years after Rachel's death, the place was then known as the place of "Rachel's sepulchre." ‡ *Stone boundaries* also appear to have taken their rise in the time of Jacob; for we find that about twenty years after the erection of the pillar at Bethel, Jacob and

* Jer. xlviii. 13. † Gen. xxxv. 20. ‡ 1 Sam. x. 2.

Laban, on their parting, set up a pillar of stone, and gathered together a heap of stones; and, after Jacob and his brethren with Laban had "eaten there upon the heap," and had given it a name expressive of its design, "Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; this heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us."

Thus then we have seen that pillars of stone as rallying places, so to speak, for worship,—that pillars of stone as memorials of the dead,—and that pillars and heaps of stone as boundaries,—appear to have derived their origin from facts that occurred in the history of the patriarch Jacob. Now, assuredly, it must afford gratification to the antiquary to be able to trace the origin of these stone monuments now existing, and to such remote antiquity too. Nor will it be less gratifying to the man who values his Bible, to find that that book, after all, is not only the repository, but the only repository, of such information.

CHAPTER II.

THE MONUMENTS THEMSELVES.

In travelling through the British Isles, if we find in our way here a huge pillar of stone, and there an assemblage of them,—here again, a heap of stones with a large flat one placed upon it, and there rough and massy stones placed upright in a circular form, and evidently in an artificial way, —it becomes an obvious inquiry, "how came they there, and for what purposes were they so placed?" Now, if, in a course of scripture reading, we find information that may supply us with a solution of such inquiries, or whereby, at least, some light might be thrown upon the subject, not only must it be a legitimate source of gratification to us as antiquaries, but as the friends of revelation. And the pleasure will, of course, be augmented, should it be found that profane or common history is perfectly accordant with these scriptural statements. Now these remarks will apply to the pillars or obelisks, the carns, the cromlechs, the circles of stones, or, as some call them, the circular temples, that are

found in great numbers in our British Isles. Moreover, if, by the discussion we can throw light on that celebrated monument of antiquity in Wiltshire, Stonehenge, that has occupied the attention of so many of our antiquaries, from Jeffery of Monmouth downward to Sir R. C. Hoare, assuredly, we must feel our obligation to sacred Scripture: nor can an essay on the subject be deemed uninteresting.

To accomplish our object, we shall, in the first place, treat of the monuments themselves, their design, and the mention made of them in Scripture, particularly as existing in those countries where the Scriptures were written, such as Phœnicia or Palestine, including Tyre and Sidon, and the nations of Canaan. We shall, then, since it might well excite inquiry how Phœnician customs should obtain here, shew that there was not only an intercourse between Israel and the Phœnicians, but that the Phœnicians had intercourse with, and formed settlements, in these British Isles; and, moreover, that those Phœnicians, and particularly their Magi, here called Druids, introduced their religion where they thus formed their settlements; and then we shall be prepared, in the third place, to account for, and to explain, the design and use of that ancient and remarkable structure, Stonehenge.

We begin with treating of the MONUMENTS

themselves; and first, of *Altars*. An altar is composed of stones, placed together for the purpose of offering upon it slain animals in sacrifice. They originally were commanded to be of earth; or if of stones, such were to be used in their rough, unhewn state. Such at least, was the direction given to Moses three thousand three hundred years ago. "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."* It was of no consequence, we presume, in what form they were made, but it is obvious that they must be so constructed as that the wood and sacrifice might be placed upon them. Those now seen ordinarily consist of four stones, three being hard flags, or large though thin stones, set up edge-wise, two making the sides, and a shorter one the end, with a fourth stone of the same kind on the top; for the other end was commonly left open; and the altars were all oblong. "There are a great many of those altars to be seen yet entire in Wales, particularly two in Kerig y Drudion parish, in Denbighshire, and one in Lhan Hammuleh parish, in Brecknockshire, with abundance elsewhere." So

*. Exod. xx. 24, 25. See also Deut. xxvii. 5, 6.

says Toland, in his "History of the Druids."* These altars, according to the same author, were placed commonly in the middle of the temples, near some great colossus, a prodigious stone, which he says was to serve "as a pedestal to some deity."† This colossus might, more probably, be the idol itself.

Besides these more common altars, there are others for the same purpose of a larger kind, which are called *Cromlechs*. These consist of several stones, some of them supporting the others by reason of their enormous bulk. Thus in Wales "there is a cromlech in Nevern parish, in Pembrokeshire, where the middle stone is eighteen feet long and nine broad toward the base, growing narrow upwards. There lies by it a piece broken off ten feet long, which seems more than twenty oxen could draw."‡ But perhaps the most remarkable in the principality is that in Anglesey, a little distance from the Marquis of Anglesey's house. According to Evans, in his tour, "it is double, and consists of a greater and a less. The greater is twelve feet long by twelve feet broad, six feet high, and at the upper edge two feet thick. This cromlech rested originally on five stones, but one being detached or thrown down, four only bear its weight at present, leaving a space

* Toland, pp. 126, 127; and Owen's Hist. of the Ancient Britons.
† Ibid. p. 130. ‡ Ibid. p. 130.

between of five feet high and six square. The smaller one adjoins closely to the narrow end of this, and is six feet square, resting on three stones, the fourth having fallen down. Not far from it is a large carn, part of which being removed, discovered a cell seven feet long and three wide, covered with two flat stones, and lined with others;" probably a place from whence an oracle proceeded, or a receptacle wherein were laid the remains of the human sacrifices that had been offered up upon the altars.

"In Caithness, and other remote parts of Scotland, these cromlechs are very numerous, some pretty entire, and others not so much consumed by time, or thrown down by storms, as disordered and demolished by the hands of men."* Of the many in Ireland there is one that demands particular notice. It is called *Crum-Cruach.* It stood in the midst of a circle of twelve obelisks, on a hill in Brefin, a district of the county of Cavan, formerly belonging to Leitrim. "It was all over covered with gold and silver, the lesser figures on the twelve stones about it being only of brass." So says Toland. And Moore, in his "Ireland," in Lardner's "Cabinet Cyclopædia," describes it as "a stone capped with gold, about which stood twelve other rough stones." And he adds, "every colony that

* Toland, p. 131.

established itself in Ireland worshipped this deity, till the arrival of St. Patrick. They sacrificed the first-born of every species to this deity; and Tighermmas Mac Follaigh, king of Ireland, commanded sacrifices to their deity on the day of Samor, and that both men and women should worship him prostrated on the ground, till they drew blood from their noses, foreheads, ears, and elbows. Many died with the severity of this worship, and hence it was called 'Magh-sleaeth,' that is, the place of slaughter."* The stumps of the circular obelisks round this idol are still to be seen; and in this temple of Magh-sleucht, or field of adoration, in Brefin, is a stone still in being, all covered with gold, on which stood Kermond Kelstach, the chief idol in Ulster; and the see of Clogher had its name from it; for Clochoir signifies the golden stone.† To this class of stony antiquities belong, also, that famous cromlech, or trewethy stone, as it is generally called in the neighbourhood of Liskeard, in Cornwall, which consists of six upright stones and one large slab covering them in an inclined position. The slab measures sixteen feet in length and ten broad, and is, at a medium, about fourteen inches thick. It rests on five of the uprights only, and at its upper end it is perforated by a small circular

* From Vet. MSS. quoted in Collect. de Reb. Hibern. No. xii.
† Toland, p. 134.

hole.* And worthy of remark it is, that it is not far from the cheese-wring,† that astonishing monument of antiquity, probably at the time this cromlech or altar was in use, as an object of adoration. In Jersey, there yet remain these monuments of Paganism. Great flat stones, of vast bigness and weight, some oval, some quadrangular, raised three or four feet from the ground, and supported by others of a less size. It is evident, both from their figure and the great quantities of ashes found in the ground thereabouts, that they were used for altars in those times of superstition. At ten or twelve feet distance, there is a small stone set up on end in the manner of a desk, where, it is supposed, the priest kneeled and performed some ceremonies, while the sacrifice was burning on the altar. More probably he was there burning incense to the deity.‡

Not only are there ashes found about these altars, but bones, as Toland remarks, indicating that sacrifices were offered on them; and notice has been taken of small circular holes in the end of the altar-stone, probably to admit the rope by which the sacrifice was bound to the altar. And Toland remarks, that they were places of

* For a rope, probably, by which the animal to be sacrificed was tied.

† Stockdale's Excursion in Cornwall, p. 130.

‡ Dr. Falle, in his Account of Jersey, in Toland, p. 132.

worship, and that the word cromlech signifies a bowing stone, because they bowed to the idol stone attached to these altars.

Now, of altars for sacrifice, the most ancient record is to be found in Scripture, and there we have their origin. The first altar of which we have mention, indeed, is that of Noah, about two thousand four hundred years before Christ: but doubtless they originated with Adam, and were continued by Abel, and onward by Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Job. And soon after we find those particular instructions concerning their rough, unhewn form, by Moses, as noticed before. And while we consider these instructions as giving rise to the rough appearance of stone altars, we might also remark, that the circular hole at the end of the altar-stone, supposed to have been used for binding the animal about to be sacrificed, seems to accord with the custom amongst the Jews, to "bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar," as indicated in those words in the 118th Psalm. Nor is that all; was the famous crum-cruach, in Ireland, mentioned above, covered with gold and silver? We find mention of the very thing in Scripture nearly two thousand five hundred years ago: "Wo unto him that saith to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach: behold, it is laid over with gold and silver."*

* Hab. ii. 19.

Secondly, we pass to the CARN Altars. These were heaps of stone, with a large flat stone upon them, on which they burnt sacred fire, and offered sacrifices to the Sun, under the name of Bel, Beal, in Latin Belenus, otherwise called Apollo. "The huge coping stones of these carns," says Toland, "were in the nature of altars, and altars of the lesser form are frequently found near them." "Ashes," he remarks also, "are found in the carns."* Moreover, he says, that the fires kindled on them were constantly accompanied with sacrifices and feasting.† It seems, from the same author, that there are these carns, or heaps of stones, "on the tops of mountains and other eminences in Ireland, in Wales, in Scotland, in the Scottish Islands, and in the Isle of Man;" and that they "consist of stones of all sorts, from one pound to a hundred. They are round in form, and somewhat tapering or diminishing upwards: but on the summit was always a flat stone." "These heaps are of all bignesses," he adds; "some of them at least a hundred cart loads of stones."‡ "The places are numberless," he says, "that take their name from these carns. Thus, in Wales, Carn-Lhecart, Carn-Lhaid; in Scotland, Carn-wath, Carn-tullock, Drum-cairn, Glen-cairn; in Ireland, Carn-mail, Carnaret, Carnan-tagher, Carnan-tober; and in Northumberland, as in other parts of the north of England, they are sometimes called haws, or hows, a name they also

* P. 129. † P. 104. ‡ P. 97.

give to the Gothic barrows."* Both Toland, and Owen, in his history of the Ancient Britons, speak of one in Cryg y Deryn, in the parish of Trelech, in Caermarthenshire, the flat stone on the top of which is nine feet long and five broad, and from ten to twelve inches thick, its circumference at the bottom about sixty yards, and its height six yards. And Toland says, he remembers one of those carns on Fawn-hill, within some miles of Londonderry, known by the name *Bealteine*, facing another such carn on the top of Inch-hill. Now Beal-teine signifies Beal's or Belen's fire, or the fire of Belenus, "by which name the Gauls and their colonies understood the Sun;"† which leads us to consider these altars as altars on which they burnt sacred fire, and offered sacrifices *in honour of the sun*;‡ for "to this day," says Dr. Lawson, "the word Beltein, fire of Bel, which is a name given to a fair held in Peebles about the beginning of May, is said to signify the *feast of the sun*, which was once observed at that season of the year."§ And Toland says, that "to this hour the first day of May is by the original Irish called La Bealteine, or the day

* Toland, p. 106. † P. 101.

‡ Hence Silius Italicus, Moore tells us, represents Apollo, another name for the Sun, as well as Baal or Bel, as delighting in the carn fires:

"Quum pius Arcitenens incensis gaudet acervi." Lib. v. 177.

§ Lawson's Discourses, p. 277. This Peebles fair is, according to Chambers's Picture of Scotland, held regularly upon the first Wednesday in May, and he calls it "The Beltaine Fair."

of Belen's fair," as May-day is by * the Highlanders of Scotland: and so it is in the Isle of Man.

On these cairns, or altars, the Druids made their anniversary fires and offered their sacrifices on May-eve, Midsummer, and the last of October. On the first of May, that the fruits of the earth might grow prosperously; at Midsummer, as ready for gathering; and on the last day of October, as a thanksgiving for finishing the harvest. "These last are still continued in Wales," says Owen, who wrote in the year 1743, "without knowing why, but that they found it the custom of their ancestors," as are those on Midsummer eve "by the Roman Catholics of Ireland,"† says Toland, who wrote about 1720, "making them in all their grounds, and carrying flaming brands about their corn-fields." "This they do," adds he, "likewise all over France, and in some of the Scottish isles."‡ With which statements agrees

* Toland, pp. 101 and 103.

† Tuathal, monarch of Ireland A.D. 130, to gratify the taste of his people for conventions and festivals, ordained that, in addition to the Triennial Council of Tara, there should be held annually three assemblies of the kingdom; one at Tlactha, on the night of Samhin, where fires were lighted and sacrifices offered to that divinity; another on the day of the Baal-fire, at the sacred hill of Usneach; and a third on the plains of Taltin, in the Ultonian district, where those annual sports, introduced in the time of the Damnonian kings, were revived."—Moore, pp. 124, 125.

‡ P. 107.

the author of "the Travels of a British Druid," who says that the Hallow-eve fires still "continue to be kindled in many parts of Scotland."* And among the different sorts of cairns in Cornwall, Moore says, "there is one called Carn Leskyg, or the Carn of Burnings."†

So far as to these carn altars, the fires and sacrifices in honour of Beal, the Sun. We now speak of the custom of *passing through* the fire in honour of the sun, the point to which we have been tending. Toland, who was an Irishman, and well acquainted with the practices of his own countrymen, says thus: "Two such fires as we have mentioned were kindled by one another on May-eve in every village of the nation, as well throughout all Gaul, as in Britain, Ireland, and the adjoining lesser islands, between which fires the men and the beasts to be sacrificed were to pass. One of the fires was on the carn, another on the ground. Hence the proverb amongst the people, when speaking of being in a strait betwixt two, of their being *between Bel's two fires.*"‡ And he says, moreover, that at these carn fires, "it was customary for the lord of the place, or his son, or some other person of distinction, to take the entrails of the sacrificed animal in his hands, and, walking barefoot over the coals thrice after the flames had ceased, to carry them strait to the

* Vol. ii. p. 122. † P. 44.

‡ Toland, p. 104.

Druid, who waited in a whole skin at the altar. If the nobleman escaped unhurt it was reckoned a good omen, welcomed with loud acclamations; but if he received any hurt, it was deemed unlucky both to the community and to himself:" to the community, we suppose, because he acted as their representative. And he tells us further, that he has "seen the people running and leaping through the St. John's fires in Ireland, and not only proud of passing unsinged, but, as if it were some kind of lustration, thinking themselves in a special manner blessed by this ceremony, of whose original, nevertheless, they were wholly ignorant, in their imperfect imitation of it."* This author has well supposed, that it might be by way of lustration, for with this view we find the heathen were accustomed to prepare themselves to enjoy the benefit of their sacrifices. They knew that they were impure, and they therefore judged it necessary to undergo lustration or purification, either by air, by water, or by fire. The latter obtained it seems in the above case, as it did in similar cases, amongst the heathen: it is worthy of remark, too, that in the result of the passing through, the *community* were concerned. Since, therefore, we may consider such lustration as a *public* lustration, it is interesting to find that such public lustrations obtained amongst the heathen in ancient times. They were performed for the welfare of whole

* Toland, p. 112.

cities and armies, and the greater concourse of people there was, the greater they thought the lustration should be.* Silius Italicus, Pliny, and Virgil, all Roman authors, speak of these lustrations by fire, and the latter, as translated by Dryden, on a particular occasion, represents a person addressing Apollo, the sun, thus:

> Oh patron of Soractes' high abodes,
> Phœbus, the ruling power among the gods,
> Whom first we view—whole woods of unctuous pine
> Burn on thy *heap*, and to thy glory shine:
> By thee protected, with our naked soles
> *Through flames unsinged we pass, and tread* the kindled coals:
> Give me, propitious power! to wash away
> The stains of this dishonourable day.†

Nor is this all. We are told by Marcus Varro, another Roman author, that they had an ointment with which they besmeared their feet when they walked through the fire; and thus, it seems, was deception practised upon the people.‡

Now, to take a review of the above, we see a carn altar, fire kindled and sacrifices offered thereon—we see also a fire upon the ground by the carn altar, and that it was customary amongst the Irish as well as in these British Isles in general, to cause that the beasts and men to be sacrificed should pass between the two fires; and also that some person of eminence, on their high anniversary days, as the representative of the

* Herbert's Religion of the Gentiles, p. 321.
† Toland, p. 115. ‡ Ibid. p. 116.

community, should pass through or over the fire that was on the ground, as a rite of lustration or purification, probably in token of consecration: Now what light does Scripture throw upon these customs?* Were these fires kindled and sacrifices offered in honour of Bel, Beal, or the Sun?† Not only do the Scriptures speak of worshipping the sun in Job's time, by kissing the hand, but not long after we find Moses speaking of worshipping the sun by sacrifice under the name of Baal, and giving us to understand that such was the prevailing worship. And Sanchoniathon, in his Phœnician history, declares that they worshipped the sun under the name of Beel-samin, which, in the Phœnician dialect, signifies the Lord of Heaven. Was there a custom of offering sacrifices of men as well as beasts? Who knows not that the heathen around and those of them who lived

* Lev. xviii. 21; Deut. xviii. 10; 2 Kings, xvii. 17; 2 Kings, xvi. 3; xxi. 6; xxiii. 10; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6; Jer. xxxii. 35; Ezek. xx. 26, 31.

† On the eve of the feast of Samhim, all those whom in the month of March preceding the Druids had, from their tribunal on Mount Usneach, condemned to death, were, in pursuance of this solemn sentence, burned between two fires. In general, however, as regarded both human creatures and brutes, the ceremony of passing them between two fires appears to have been intended, not to affect life, but merely as a mode of periodical purification.‡ "The more ignorant Irish," says Ledwich, "still drive their cattle through these fires as an effectual means of preserving them from future accidents."§

‡ Moore's Ireland, p. 25. § Ibid. 25.

amongst the Israelites did so, and that Israel imitated them? Have we been noticing the custom of passing through the fire? How often do we find Israel or their kings reproved for this abominable custom! It is said, indeed, that they offered to Moloch, but this was only another name for the sun, בעל Baal, signifying Lord מלך, signifying he that reigns, both alike applicable to the sun. Thus in Scripture we have, at least, the first record of these idolatrous practices; and how they obtained here, we shall see in the sequel.

Thirdly. Our attention will be directed next to the *pillars*, or *obelisks*, that still remain in the British Isles. These were raised by our heathen countrymen in honour of their gods, and have been objects of worship. It is not difficult to conceive how men, having first raised them as rallying places for divine worship, and, also as memorials of divine interposition, might, in process of time, venerate them as objects of worship, or as representatives of the gods.

However, it does appear that they did thus venerate and worship them, and that the first preachers of the Christian doctrine found it difficult to root out this spirit of idolatry from amongst the people; in consequence of which, they engraved or erected crosses upon them to change their use. St. Patrick himself had recourse to this expedient, for on three Colosses erected in the days of Paganism, he inscribed the proper name of Christ in

three languages; namely, Joshua, in Hebrew, on the first; Soter, in Greek, on the second; and Salvator, in Latin, on the third. Nor is it improbable that the pillars called crosses, so common in this country, derived their origin from this idolatrous practice. The stony pillar was first erected in honour of some deity: when Christianity was introduced, in accommodation to the prejudices of the people, the pillar was allowed to stand, but as consecrated to a crucified Saviour; and having the figure of a cross placed on it, received the name of "the Cross," and, as standing in the market, "the Market Cross." These crosses are very common in Cornwall, almost every village contains one or more of them. They consist, in general, of a shaft of granite and a carved head, with the figure of a cross in relief. "The most remarkable ones are the cross in Mawgan churchyard, Lanhwitt, and Frier Hole Cross, on the side of the road leading from Bodmin to Launceston." *

These idolatrous pillars or obelisks abound in the Highlands of Scotland, and in the adjacent isles. They are "stones set up on end, some thirty, some twenty-four feet high, others higher or lower; and this sometimes where no such stones are to be dug. Wales is likewise full of them; and some there are in the least cultivated

* Stockdale's Excursions in Cornwall, p. 69.

parts of England, with very many in Ireland."* And they are not confined to this country. Profane history speaks of this idolatrous practice as common. From it we learn that the Bacchus of the Thebans, was a pillar. The Assyrian Nebo was represented by a plain pillar consecrated by anointing, and was worshipped by erecting mounts of stones to his honour; † and the celebrated Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the world, was erected in honour of Apollo, the Sun. Ecclesiastical history teaches the same; for in the Octavius of Minucius Felix, mention is made of Cœcilius, having espied a statue of Serapis, raising his hand to his mouth, and paying his adorations in kisses.‡ Now we have not only the earliest record of this custom in Scripture, but the facts which appear to have given occasion to them. About fifteen hundred years before Christ, we find Moses forbidding the Israelites to rear up a standing image or pillar in the land to bow down unto it;§ which supposes that the custom then prevailed. The prophet Jeremiah upbraids them for saying to a stock, "Thou art my father; and to a stone, thou hast brought me forth;" and Habakkuk denounces a "Wo" against such as should say to

* Toland, p. 116. † Milner, p. 84, from Selden.

‡ Reeves' Apologies, part ii. p. 38.

§ Lev. xxvi. 1; Deut. xxi. 22. The word is the very same that is used for Jacob's pillar; and the common Hebrew word for images, as used by Moses, is statues or pillars.

a dead stone, "Arise." Here then we see the antiquity of the custom. And the origin of it is very naturally traced to the patriarch Jacob setting up and anointing a pillar as a rallying place for worship; for the Jews say, that *the* pillar which Jacob erected at Bethel, concerning which so much is said in Genesis, became afterwards an object of worship to the Phœnicians. Nor is that all; they add, that they consecrated other stones with the like unction, and called them Bœtylia, or Bœtylos, in memory of that erected at Bethel.* And this supposition is the more probable, because, connected with this pillar-worship is the ceremony of anointing by pouring of oil upon the pillar, which is in exact accordance with the conduct of Jacob at Bethel in that country. History, both ancient and modern, informs us, that such was the practice. Bishop Lowth notices it as appearing from many testimonies of the ancients; and he quotes Arnobius as giving an account of his own practice in this respect; as he does also Theophrastus, speaking of it as "the custom of a superstitious man, when he passed by these anointed stones in the streets, to take out his phial of oil and pour it on them, and, having fallen on his knees, to make his adorations, and so departing." As to modern testimony, I think it is Sir W. Forbes, in his Oriental Memoirs, who says, that "pouring oil upon a stone is practised

* Reeves' Apologies, vol. ii. p. 40.

at this day upon many a shapeless stone throughout Hindostan." And it is worthy of remark, that Toland, without having any reference to the fact above mentioned, says, that "many of these pillars have a cavity on the top capable of holding a pint, and sometimes hath a channel or groove, about an inch deep, reaching from this hollow place to the ground."* And what could this be but to receive the oil, together with the drink offering, and to drain it off?

That the practice of rearing and anointing pillars of stone, for worship, took its rise from the fact recorded in Scripture of Jacob's anointing the pillar, appears probable also from the *name* given afterwards to these pillars. They were called Βαιτυλοι and Βαιτυλια, most probably from Bethel, the name given to the place where Jacob set up his pillar. But the fact itself is so interesting, that it deserves a recital here, especially as it was probably the origin of all the pillar-worship that afterwards obtained in the world. Isaac and Rebecca being apprized of the murderous design of Esau, Jacob's brother, gave Jacob a charge to go to Padan Aram. He obeyed them and went. While on his journey, night coming on, he took a stone, placed it for his pillow, and laid his head on it to sleep. While asleep, he was favoured with a heavenly vision, the result of which was, that, as a memorial of God's goodness

* Toland, p. 136.

to him, he placed the stone for a pillar; and designing to consecrate the place for the worship of God for himself, for his family, and for such as might be with him, should God favour him in the object of his journey, and bring him back in peace, he poured oil upon it, as a token of such consecration, and gave the place the name of Bethel, which, in Hebrew, signifies "the house of God." "He alighted," says the sacred historian, "upon a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Then follows—for perhaps it may be considered too tedious to recite the whole narrative—a promise to Jacob from him who made an appearance (probably of a glorified man) at the top of the ladder, that he would be with him, and bring him back to that land. At such a vision, designed to signify what the Saviour himself expressed when he said, "I am the way," as well as the gracious intercourse established between heaven and earth as founded thereon, we cannot wonder that Jacob should be so impressed with that solemn awe and grateful delight expressed in the narrative. "He awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid,

and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." It then follows, "And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and he called the name of that place Bethel." And then he vows, that if God would so and so favour him, that the stone which he had set for a pillar should be "God's house," that is, the place of assembling for divine worship. Accordingly we find, that after his return, on God's reminding the too forgetful patriarch of his vow, "he and his household, and all that were with him," arose and went to Bethel; and built there an altar, and added to the former name "El," calling it "El-Bethel," that is, "the God of Bethel." Here again, God appeared to Jacob, and whether he put up another pillar, or whether it is a repetition of what he did before, it is added, "And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him (for he appeared as a man, probably as a prelude to the incarnation), even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon; and Jacob called the name of the place, where God spake to him, Bethel." Facts so extraordinary as these must doubtless make a deep and sacred impression, not only upon Jacob himself, and "the people that were with him;" but also upon his posterity; and we cannot wonder,

therefore, that, at length, a stone originally set up for a rallying place for worship, should, in the erring mind of man, become itself the object of veneration, and, indeed, in process of time, the object of worship, as, the Jews report, was actually the case with the people of that or the neighbouring country, the Phœnicians. Nor can we wonder that it should spread abroad among other nations, and that the stones thus set up should obtain a name so similar to that where the first consecration of stones took place.* See, then, that we are indebted to Scripture, not only for the most ancient account of the fact, but also of the origin of pillar-worship. Add to this, that the prophet Habakkuk suggests an idea which still further accounts for their lapse into this foolish idolatry, viz. that they supposed, after consecration, that a spirit from the God they worshipped was somehow or other in or about the stony pillar; for, says he, reproving them for "saying to the stone, Arise"—"There is *no spirit* (such is the Hebrew word רוּחַ) in it." But the whole verse is worth recording, "Wo unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dnmb stone, Arise, it shall teach! behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath† at all in the midst of it."

Fourthly. The British Isles abound in circles of these stones or obelisks, called by many *Circular*

* *See* also Lev. xxvi. 1. † The word is, as before stated, "spirit."

Temples. These we consider as places of worship, which the word "clacken," the name by which they are called in the Highlands, signifies: they are rough, unhewn stones, at a considerable distance apart, and of different sizes, placed in a circular form. And, in some places, there are three or four of these circles on the same spot. That remarkable one at Stonehenge is composed of four circles, or two circles and two ovals one within another. Staunton Drew, about six or seven miles from Bristol, has three circles, each of them separate from the others, though in the same inclosure. Both of these we have seen. That celebrated monument of antiquity of this kind in the neighbourhood of Liskeard, called "the Hurlers," consists of three circles of upright stones, while that between St. Buriand's and Sarund has only one circle. Thus they differ as to the form of their structure, as they do with reference to the size of the stones; some of the circles being composed of stones not more than from three to five or six feet, while others are more than twenty feet high, and proportionally broad and thick. Some of these circles have a large stone in the centre, as that between St. Buriand's and Sarund:* and Toland gives us an account of one in the island of Lewis, at the village of Classerniss, in which there is one in the centre. But we will give an account of the Temple itself just mentioned,

* Camden, p. 5.

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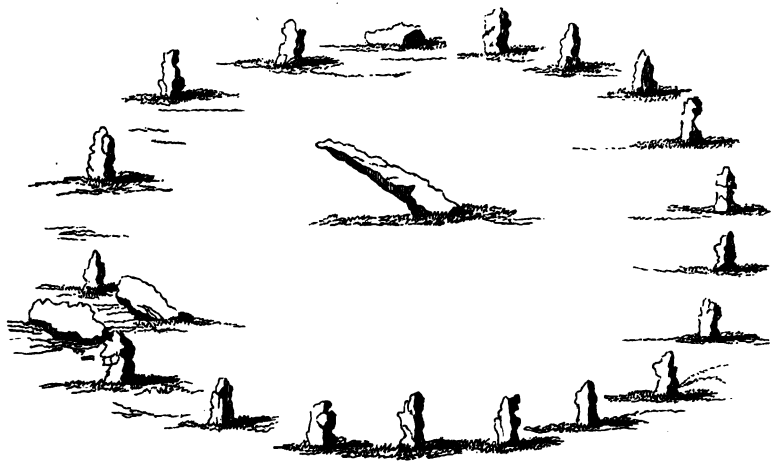


A CIRCULAR TEMPLE OR HEATHEN PLACE OF WORSHIP.

From Borlase's Cornwall.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

as he calls it, since it is a remarkable one. "The circle," says he, "consists of twelve obelisks, about seven feet high each, and distant from each other six feet. In the centre stands a stone thirteen feet high, in the perfect shape of the rudder of a ship. Directly south from the circle there stand four obelisks running out in a line; and another such line due east, and a third to the west; the number and distances of the stones being in these wings the same: so that this temple, the most entire that can be, is at the same time both round and winged. But to the north there reach, by way of avenue, two straight ranges of obelisks, of the same bigness and distances with those of the circle; yet the ranges themselves are eight feet distant, and each consisting of nineteen stones, the thirty-ninth being in the entrance of the avenue. This temple," he adds, "stands astronomically, denoting the twelve signs of the Zodiac and the four principal winds, subdivided each into four others; by which, and the nineteen stones on each side the avenue betokening the cycle of nineteen years, I can prove it to have been dedicated principally to the Sun, but subordinately to the Seasons and the Elements, particularly to the Sea and the Winds, as appears by the rudder in the middle." There is another temple, it seems, about a quarter of a mile from the former; and he remarks that commonly two temples stand near each other. Perhaps one was

for the worship of the Sun and the other of the Moon. As a proof that two temples commonly stood together, he says, that "east of Drumcrug, in the Scottish Isle of Arran, is a circular temple, whose area is about thirty paces over; and south of the same village is such another temple, in the centre of which still remains the altar; being a broad, thin stone, supported by three other such stones." In the greatest island of Orkney, commonly called the Mainland, there are likewise two temples, where the natives believe, by tradition, that the Sun and Moon were worshipped; which belief of theirs he concludes to be very right, since the lesser temple is semicircular; the greater is one hundred and two paces diameter. Two green mounts are erected at the east and west end of it, "on which it is not improbable that the Druidical priests sat in judgment." There is a trench or ditch round each of these temples, like that about Stonehenge; and, in short, "every such temple had the like inclosure. Many of the stones are above twenty or twenty-four feet in height above the ground, about five feet in breadth, and a foot or two in thickness. Some of them are fallen down." Such is Toland's account of these temples; to which I shall add nothing more, excepting a statement of those which the writer has seen himself. First, those at Staunton Drew, about six or seven miles from Bristol. Here there were three circles. There were fourteen stones forming one

circle, one almost disappearing; to the north of that there was another circle, consisting of eight stones, and a third smaller circle, still more northward, with one in the middle of it. All the stones were rude and misshapen, of different sizes, but none higher than ten feet, and all inclosed within a field of perhaps three or four acres. Another circular place of this sort he has seen on Staunton Moor, in Derbyshire. By the common people it is called "the Nine Ladies," for a reason by no means satisfactory, and therefore we shall not repeat it. Here there are nine stones forming an apparently correct circle, about two feet high each. The diameter of it is thirty-two feet; the stones are not at equal distances, but two or three from ten to twelve feet distance. In the middle there is a hollow, quite soft, being covered with moss. Whether there had been a stone or pillar there is uncertain, but at present there is no appearance of it. Perhaps from zeal against idolatry, or from interest, as being much larger than the rest, it might have been taken away, while the others, being fixed deep in the ground, might be suffered to remain. At Hartle Moor, in the same county, there is another of these circular erections, in a field, called from it "the Nine Stones." Six or seven of them appear, and all may be traced by looking over a wall that now separates them. These stones are of different heights, from eight feet downwards, and on three of them, at the top,

there are holes and channels, of which latter we shall have occasion to speak when we treat of "the Rock Idols." Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, which contains two circles and two ovals; and likewise Abury, about eight or nine miles from Devizes, in Wiltshire, we have likewise seen. Stonehenge will occupy our attention hereafter in a distinct essay. The stones belonging to that circular temple, Abury, are more stupendous by far than even those of Stonehenge, though a temple of a very different form. But, concerning this last astonishing monument of antiquity, we have not time or room to enter into detail, even though it were in our power. Enough, we presume, has been said to give an idea of these remains. With reference to the *design* of their erection, if it should appear that some of them were erected for judicial or other public purposes, it is still more apparent that they were designed for public idolatrous worship; for the word "clachan," the Gaelic word used for them to this day, signifies a place of worship; and it is a remarkable fact, stated by Dr. Jamieson, in his History of the Culdees, that at this day, "going to and from church," and "going to and from the stones," are phrases used synonimously. Thus, in speaking of going to or from church, the Highlanders express themselves by saying, "Have you been to the stones?" or "Are you come from the stones?"* We are

* Dr. Jamieson's Historical Account of the Culdees, p. 25.

warranted, therefore, in supposing, when we see such circles, or such huge stones thus placed, that we see a place occupied, in heathen times, for public worship; and, amongst other things, for the rite of sacrificing; especially as wherever the ground about any of these temples is excavated, considerable remains of the bones both of sheep and oxen are found.*

Now, if we advert to the Scriptures, we shall find, not only the earliest account, but the *origin* of these structures. Thence we find that, when the covenant between God and Israel was about to be ratified at the foot of Mount Sinai, Moses not only built an altar, but that he erected twelve pillars of stone according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel, and that there the solemnities of the ratification were performed. This is the first record we have in any history of a *number* of stones being thus used for sacred purposes. We are not indeed told that they were placed in a circular form, but most probably they were. This was about three hundred years after Jacob's pillar had been erected to mark the place of assembly for worship, and about fifteen hundred years before Christ. Shortly after this, about forty years, we find twelve stones pitched in Gilgal, which, though they were immediately designed as a memorial of Israel's passing through Jordan, yet the spot seems, at least, to have been

* Identity, &c. p. 66.

a place of general assembly; and since here the people offered sacrifices, at the appointment of Saul to be king, and it afterwards was the place where Saul offered his burnt-offering and peace-offering, we may fairly infer that it was a place of worship. Certainly, afterwards it became a place of *idolatrous* worship for Israel, as did also the very Bethel of which we have before spoken.* As to Gilgal, we may remark moreover, that the word גלגל, Galgal, or Gilgal, signifies a circle; it is therefore not improbable that it derived its name from the stones placed there in a circular form.

To occurrences like these, then, we trace the origin of the circular temples above mentioned; nor do we find any other method of accounting for them at all. Let the Scriptures, therefore, have their due honour, as the most ancient and interesting record of antiquity: for, whether the traveller meet with the common altar, or the cromlech, or the carn altar, or the pillar, or the circle of pillars, he may account for them, or at least have great light thrown upon them, by a reference to that sacred record.

But there are several other monuments of antiquity that have not respect to worship, on which the Scriptures will throw light.

* Josh. iv. 20, v. 10; 1 Sam. xi. 13; xiii. 8—12; Hos. iv. 15; Amos, iv. 4; and v. 5.

Fifthly. Pillars and stones as *marks* or *memorials.*

These have been erected for different purposes; for boundaries, for remembrance of the dead, and of persons of eminence, as well as of remarkable events or achievements.

Who will call in question their use as boundaries? As memorials of the dead, our common churchyards supply us with evidence as to stones; and, though pillars of stone are in disuse, yet they are not wholly obsolete, for we have ourselves seen one in a churchyard at Eyam, near Dovedale, about six feet high and one foot broad, as far as our recollection serves us, which doubtless has been standing for many hundred years, and probably is the oldest monument in the place. There are pillars in existence, near which ashes and bones are found, sometimes in urns, and sometimes in stone coffins: also scales, hammers, pieces of weapons, and other things, some finely gilt or polished. It seems to have been a custom among the Greeks, thus to erect pillars as memorials of the dead. Thus, a stone was raised over the grave of Achilles and Patroclus, which Alexander the Great anointed with oil. And Sarpedon, the king of the Lycians, had a stone raised over his tomb.

And who knows not, that pillars or obelisks have been, and still are, erected, in order to commemorate remarkable events and exploits?

Now let us advert again to the Scriptures. Have pillars been placed as boundaries? See the first mention of such a thing in the history of Jacob the patriarch. Jacob and Laban were about finally to separate from each other by mutual agreement, therefore they placed a pillar to mark the boundary over which neither party was to pass; and that pillar, in conjunction with the heap of stones (of which more hereafter), was to be a witness between them of their mutual covenant, and a beacon or watch-tower. See the history.*

Were pillars erected as memorials of the dead? In Scripture, about a thousand years before Christ, we find Absalom rearing up a pillar to be a memorial of himself. "Now Absalom in his lifetime," says the sacred historian, "had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called unto this day Absalom's place." A pillar, by the way, that proved the monument of his disgrace as a rebellious son, rather than of his honour! But there is an instance of such monumental pillar far earlier than that of Absalom. We refer to the one that was placed over the grave of Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, so far back as more than seventeen hundred years before Christ. The record of it runs

* Gen. xxxi. 41—45, 46.

thus:—"And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."* Nor was it remaining in Moses's time only, but in that of Samuel the prophet, for when, six or seven hundred years after, he was informing Saul concerning the asses that were lost, he makes mention of "Rachel's sepulchre" as a well-known place.†

Again, are pillars raised as *memorials* of remarkable events and exploits? Samuel, we find, on occasion of a remarkable deliverance of Israel from the Philistines, "took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shem, and called the name of it Eben-ezer," or the stone of help, "saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Probably the "stone of Reuben," "the stone of Ezel," "the stone of Gibeon," and "the stone of Zoheloth," of which severally we read in Scripture, were all of them set up to commemorate some remarkable event or exploit. But there is one which we must not pass over, and that is the "great stone" that was set up by Joshua, "under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord," in commemoration of, and as a witness to Israel, of their having in solemn assembly taken Jehovah to be their God.

Perhaps some of those pillars or obelisks that are now standing in different parts of the British

* Gen. xxxv. 19, 20. † 1 Sam. x. 2.

isles were raised as *way-marks*, or as marks of observation. If so, we have mention of these also in Scripture; for when, by the prophet Jeremiah, God would encourage his people to believe that after the desolation made by their enemies, and their dispersions, they should return to their cities, he commands them "to set up way-marks," that they might find their way thither from the enemies' country on their return, thereby intimating that they should return, and so have occasion for them. "Set thee up *way-marks*, make thee high heaps: set thine heart toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest: turn again, O Virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities."* Such pillars, as marks of observation, appear to be intended also in that passage in Ezekiel: "And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog." †

So much for pillars. We now pass on to, Sixthly, *Carns* or *heaps* of stones.

These, we conceive, were raised for several purposes; for *way-marks*, as *boundaries*, to *mark* the dead with *infamy*, and to mark them with *honour*.

They were raised for *way-marks*. Toland speaks of the custom of the Irish to erect rude and small pyramids of stones "along the road," which heaps are called, he says, "*Leachda*," and they "are

* Jer. xxxi. 21. † Ezek. xxxix. 15.

made of the first stones that offer." He, indeed, considers them as monuments of the dead; but being made along the roads, it seems more probable that they were intended as way-marks. If so, Scripture again concurs, and comes in with its claim for notice as to the antiquity of its records, because, seven hundred years before Christ, you have an allusion to the custom of "*heaps* for directories to the traveller." "Set thee up high *heaps*," says the Lord to Israel, by Jeremiah, for the purposes mentioned before, when treating of the pillars, "even that thou mightest find the way back to thy cities." And four hundred and fifty years before this, we have mention of the stone "Ezel," which word itself signifies a way-mark.

They were thrown up and raised for *boundaries*. At least it is probable they were so, for Camden, in his Britannia, speaks of authors who have "writ about bounds," as stating "that large stones used to be gathered by both parties" concerned, "and erected for limits." Now go back so far as to the patriarchal age; there you will find, in the covenant transaction between Jacob and Laban concerning boundaries, that Jacob, after having set up a stone for a pillar, directed his brethren to "gather stones." It is added, "and they took stones, and made an heap, and did eat there upon the heap. And Laban said to Jacob, This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will

not pass over this heap to thee; and that thou shall not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm." With this proposal Jacob concurred, and the whole transaction was confirmed by covenant and sacrifice.

These heaps were also thrown up over the dead,* and sometimes as marks of *infamy*. Camden speaks of them in this light. He says, "it is the custom in several places to cast heaps of stones on the graves of malefactors and self-murderers; and hence he supposes it was, that the worst of traitors were called Karn-vradwyr, a carn-traitor; and the most notorious thieves, Karn-hhadron, a carn-thief." He shews also that it was the custom among the Romans, as indicated by that epitaph ascribed to Virgil, on the infamous robber Balista:—

> "Monte sub hoc lapidum tegitur Balista sepultus
> Nocte, die, tutum carpe, viator, iter."

The meaning of which is, that this noted Balista, having been buried under this heap of stones, the traveller might pass safely, either by night or by day. Camden moreover remarks, that they are common in the Highlands of Scotland, and in Ireland; whence he infers, that though it was a custom obtaining among the Romans, yet that this custom in these isles could not originate with

* W. Rae Wilson, in his "Travels," speaks of "piles of stones covering over or marking the place of graves," in the plain of Zebulun. Vol. ii. p. 5.

them, as the Romans did not reach those parts.* So infamous are these carns, that the most revengeful wish a person can utter is, that "a carn be his monument." Toland gives the same account of these carns,† as raised over traitors and thieves, as does the author of the "Travels of a British Druid."‡ Now whence this custom?

Here again the Scripture supplies us with the desirable information. On referring to that ancient record, we shall find that, in the time of Joshua, the successor of Moses, Achan, contrary to the solemn injunction of Joshua, "took of the accursed thing," and hid it in his tent; in consequence of which, having stoned him with stones, they raised over him a great heap of stones, which was in existence at the time when the book of Joshua was written. This is the first record we have of these carns, or heaps of stones, in history; and perhaps was the first instance of it. As we proceed in the same sacred history, shortly after, we find that the king of Ai, one of the kings devoted to destruction, after having been hanged, had a great heap of stones cast over him, that remained as before. And now let us see the same mark of infamy over a traitor. This was the base traitor Absalom, that unnatural son of his father David. Of him it is recorded, that, after his untimely death, "they took Absalom, and cast him

* Camden, p. 588. † Toland, p. 102.
‡ Travels, p. 137.

into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him." Concerning this last fact, Mr. Henry, the celebrated commentator, observes, that "travellers say the place is taken notice of to this day, and it is common for passengers to throw a stone to this heap, with words to this purpose:—'Cursed be the memory of rebellious Absalom, and cursed for ever be all wicked children that rise up in rebellion against their parents.'" Ah! *he* reared up a pillar to raise his renown. *God* cast upon him a heap of stones to cover him with infamy! That passage in Lam. iii. 53, has, most probably, reference to the same custom, "They have cast a stone upon me."

One more purpose of these carns, or heaps of stones, remains to be considered, and that is, as a *mark of honour;* for not only does the author of the Travels of a British Druid speak of them, but Dr. E. Clarke, in his travels, found carns of this kind. And speaking of their resemblance to the cairns of Scotland, which consist of stones confusedly heaped together, says, that in the north of Scotland, in allusion to them, the people say, as an expression of friendship, "I will cast a stone upon thy cairne." But, as I find no notices of heaps thrown together over the dead with this view in Scripture, I shall pass them over, but proceed to,

Seventhly, HEAPS of EARTH, or Barrows, as memorials of the dead.

These heaps, or barrows, abound near that celebrated circular temple Stonehenge, and are repositories of the dead, who probably were interred there from the same superstitious feeling that induces a Jew to think it a great privilege to be buried in the valley of Jehoshaphat in the Holy Land. But more of these barrows when we speak of Stonehenge. Heaps of earth, and perhaps of stone, called generally barrows or tumuli, abound in many parts of the world. Dr. Clarke speaks of them in his travels in Scandinavia; and remarks that, whether under the form of a mound in Scandinavia, in Russia, or in North America, a barrow in England, a cairn in Wales or Scotland or Ireland, they had universally the same origin. Hartley, in his travels, speaks of them, and says, that between Sardis and Thyatira there are an immense multitude of tumuli or barrows on the celebrated plain on which Cyrus overthrew the empire of Lydia.

Without doubt, these are sepulchral monuments. Now, what trace have we of them in Scripture? * We have mention of them as early as the day of Job, seventeen or eighteen hundred years before Christ; for in two places we read of heaps as places

* "We may, therefore, from such strong resemblance between primæval and nearly patriarchal customs in the East, and those aboriginal works in Ireland and Britain in the West, infer that these sepulchral barrows are almost without exception the works of the first race of settlers in these countries." King's Munimenta Antiqua, book i.

of interment. The word, indeed, is in our translation "grave;" but in the margin it is "heap." "Yet shall he be brought to the grave, and one shall watch over the heap."* So the Hebrew, intimating that, whereas there might be danger of some person or persons removing or taking away from the heap, one should watch over it, as probably was customary. The words in the other place are, "he will not stretch out his hand to the heap;"† that is, as Mr. Henry expounds it, "Though God never with a strong hand opposed himself against him, yet, saith he, he will not stretch out his hand to the grave (the heap): the hand of God's wrath would bring him to death, but would not follow him beyond death."

Eighthly. There is another kind of monument of antiquity that we do not find has been distinctly insisted on, upon which the Scriptures will throw light. We shall call them *Sacred Rocks*. For we consider them as rocks on which idolatrous sacrifices were offered—or as themselves objects of idolatry—or as rocks on which were exhibited the objects of idolatry. They are immense blocks of stone, standing alone on high and extended moors, or at the edge of lofty hills or mountains, where the whole scenery, on account of its sublime appearance, is calculated to inspire with awe. And they are distinguished by having small round holes or cavities, together, generally, with chan-

* Job, xxi. 32. † Ibid. xxx. 24.

nels artificially cut out on the plane surface at the top. And to these latter circumstances we shall presently beg particular attention; first, because it is this which seems to connect them with the stony pillar that the patriarch Jacob rendered sacred by pouring oil, and likewise a drink-offering, upon it; or else, secondly, with the custom of offering sacrifices upon rocks, as recorded in Scripture, because without the light of Scripture no satisfactory conjecture can be formed of such rocky masses, much less of such holes, cavities, or channels; and, thirdly, because, though in two or three instances notice has been taken of a channel or two on these stones in other writers, yet they have been left altogether unexplained. Camden, or rather the author of the "Additions" to that work, speaking of a certain Altar-stone, as he calls it, in Nevern parish, Pembrokeshire, "somewhat of an oval form, and about twelve yards in circumference, placed on four stones (whereof one is useless as not touching it) scarce two feet high," says, that at the thin end of it "there is such a ductus or conveyance as might carry off any liquid that should run down;" adding, however, "but to what purpose it was designed, I shall not pretend to conjecture."* Toland, too, speaking of idolatrous pillars, says, "I shall say no more of such pillars, but that many of them have a cavity on the top capable to hold a pint, and some-

* Camden's Brit. p. 638.

times more; with a channel or groove, about an inch deep, reaching from this hollow place to the ground, of the use whereof in due time." But of this "use" however we find nothing afterwards in his work.* These are the only hints of such holes or channels on these rock-stones that occur in the course of our reading; and, after personal examination and discovery, we shall now state what we have seen as to these rocks. The first we shall mention is one called "Gel Moorstone," standing just on the edge of that lofty moor called Stanton Moor, Derbyshire. Its circumference (for we omitted measuring that one) we suppose to be about ten or twelve feet, and its height eight. On the top surface there was a cavity or hollow place eight inches deep: there were also three cut channels to let off some liquid, together with a small round hole at the east side of the rock-stone, very near the top. Not very distant from this stone was another, called "Cat's Stone." This was much larger than the other, being twenty-seven feet in circumference, and from twelve to fourteen feet high. On the plane surface of the top of this rock there were many small round holes two or three inches deep, as if to receive some liquid, and on the same top surface, directed to the edge, there were not less than ten small channels cut in the different parts of it, as if to carry off some other liquid besides that which

* Toland's Hist. of the Druids, p. 136.

might be poured into the holes. To this top you ascend by steps cut out in it. There was another immensely large rock of stone standing erect and single in another part of the moor, called "Thomas Stone," twelve feet high, as measured, and not less than forty feet in circumference. You ascend this also by steps cut out, and, together with these, iron cramps driven in to take hold of by the hand; and, on the top surface, to your surprise, you find a round hole, about fourteen inches in diameter and eight inches deep. It was then nearly filled with water, the season having been rainy. Here we did not notice any channels cut, or any other holes. Steps were cut out here too, as well as irons inserted. At another place, in the low part of the moor, towards Birchover, there is an immense rock-stone, called "Endle Stone;" but as there are no holes on the top, nor is the channel so manifestly cut, we forbear to enlarge upon it; but, at some distance from this, you come to "Rootor Rocks." Here, in the centre of an immense collection of irregular rock-stones, there is a stone standing higher than the rest, with a small shaft or tower of stone, about a foot square, in the middle of it, having an iron rod run through it perpendicularly, as if to fix it to the stone on which it is placed, as well as to preserve its connexion with the pile of rocks in general. But that which is remarkable here, as well as that which indeed seems to designate it as

a sacred object, is, that on this top, or highest rock-stone, there are also holes, and many channels to let off the water down the sides, as in former instances; and there is likewise a sort of vase, artificially cut out, of an oblong square form, perhaps about fourteen inches by ten, and four or five inches deep, as if made to hold water. Proceeding to Hartle Moor, you have immense rocks again, called "Robin Hood's Stride;" on the top of which two elevated upright rocks present themselves to view, high above the rest, like two immense pillars. To the top of these there was no apparent method of ascending, and therefore we could not ascertain whether there were any small holes or larger cavities cut out upon it, as on the others before mentioned; but it is remarkable, that there are a great number of cut channels both before and behind both of them, as if to let off the liquid down the sides; and some of these cavities were very deep. And, it is worthy of notice, that, besides these two, there were none of the other rock-stones about the place that were thus channelled.

Such, then, is our statement of these rocks; and these objects naturally remind us of that stupendous monument of antiquity in Cornwall, called "the Cheese-wring;" which appears to have been, as the above rocks we conceive were, connected with idolatrous worship. This Cheese-wring, according to Stockdale, in his "Excursions

in Cornwall,"* "is a natural pile of rocks, thirty-two feet high, of eight stones or layers, apparently placed one above another, the largest at the top:" but, assuredly, it cannot be a natural production: it must be a work of art, achieved by those mechanical powers that were employed in the erection of other monuments of antiquity, such as Abury and Stonehenge; and if we consider it as built for sacred purposes, no doubt, as in those cases, no power of art or skill would be spared in its erection.

We have said that we conceived that the rocks concerning which we have been treating, were either rocks on which idolatrous sacrifices were offered, or were themselves objects of idolatrous worship, or rocks on which were exhibited such objects of worship.† If not so, why these holes cut? why these channels, &c.? And that they are in some way connected with their idolatry, appears from the circumstance that they are found in the neighbourhood of other idolatrous remains. That on Stanton Moor, called "Gel Moor Stone;" that called "Cat's Stone;" and that called "Thomas Stone," of which we have spoken above: neither of them is far distant from one of those circular places of worship, of which we have so largely treated: and that huge pile of rocks, with those two immense rock-pillars in Hartle Moor, recently mentioned, are very near another circular place of worship. Now then, first, were these rocks on

* Page 130. † Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 250.

which *idolatrous sacrifices were offered?* The holes upon their tops, and the ducts or channels connected with them, render such a supposition by no means improbable; and there are passages of Scripture which appear to sanction it. Thus, in the history of Manoah and his wife, in the Book of Judges,* it is said, "Manoah took a kid, with a meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the Lord;" having been induced to do so, perhaps, from the occurrence that took place in the time of Gideon, not a hundred years before, when the Angel of the Lord commanded him to take his offering and lay it upon a rock. Saul's† command to "roll him a great stone" was, as it appears, to sacrifice upon it. And when, in Ezekiel's time, the Lord complains that the Jews had set blood upon the top of a rock, what more probable than that they had shed "the blood of the souls of the poor innocents" for sacrifice there to their Baal, or Moloch, the Sun? Or, secondly, were these rocks *themselves objects of idolatrous worship?* What has been already said concerning pillars or statues being so, would seem in some degree to justify the supposition; and when we consider that it was customary to consecrate them by the pouring out of oil and of drink-offerings upon them, the hypothesis appears still more probable, as it would account for the holes and channels, such being made for the purpose of carrying off

* Judges, xiii. 19. † 1 Sam. xiv. 33, 34.

such oil and wine: yet the amount of evidence in favour of the first hypothesis is greater than that in favour of the second, because the ducts of conveyance are so numerous and considerable. But a third question arises, Were these rocks for the exhibition of idols? We answer, such might be the case in regard to such of them as have basins, but no small holes or ducts. Now, in reverting to the statement just given of the rocks on Stanton Moor, it will be observed, that there is a rock called "Thomas Stone," that has a basin on the top of it, but no holes or channels: we may conjecture therefore that it might have been for an exhibition of some idolatrous images. In the margin of our Bibles we repeatedly read of "sun-images;" and what if these cavities were formed as rests or sockets of some such images?

To confirm us in the idea that these huge rock-stones were held sacred, we mention it as a curious fact*, that within, perhaps, fifty or sixty yards of the "Thomas Stone" above mentioned, there is yet remaining a Druid's chair called "Thomas' Chair;" whence we may suppose the Druid Priest delivered his instructions, or pronounced his decrees. And a remarkable monument of antiquity it is. From information

* It is not unworthy of observation, too, that this Druid's chair should be near the Thomas Stone, on which we suppose the image was placed; nor is it that this rock-stone is immensely large, far more so than the other connected with it.

received, it appeared that until lately the chair had been in its proper position; but it has been overthrown. This circumstance, however, does not prevent our ascertaining what kind of a thing it is. It is a large stone about five feet high, three feet wide, and as many thick, so excavated as to form a seat for a man, with a place cut out also for the feet. And, what is also observable, in cutting out the place for the seat, there is room made at each side for the arms to repose themselves at ease; and still more remarkable it is, that there are small channels cut out at the top of the chair, in different directions, as if to carry off the rain, and prevent its reaching the person seated in it. Now, as it is generally understood that the Druidical priests delivered instructions or pronounced decrees at their religious festivals, near the spot consecrated to their idols, what more reasonable than to suppose that the rock itself, near which this chair is found, was a sacred rock, and that the Druid priests here instructed the votaries of the idol? On the whole we should conjecture that this immense rock, called "Thomas Stone," was the seat of the idol or "sun-image," and that the other rock-stones, with holes and channels, were rocks on which they offered sacrifice to it; and in the valley below, under the clifts, the victims for sacrifice were slain, the multitude being below in the valley. And to review this scene at Stanton Moor, we shall venture to

offer the following thoughts. The Phœnicians sacrificed and burnt incense in *high* places, and the high places were the very spots which they chose for this sacrificing. And the houses of Israel and of Judah, imitating their example, did so too. Hence this their idolatry,—God having most condescendingly declared that he was "an husband unto them,"—being spiritual whoredom, their God upbraids them with their conduct in the following language: "Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice," as referring to their idolatrous worship upon the mountains and high places. Moreover, the Phœnicians offered their children in sacrifice on these occasions, and so did Israel and Judah; and hence, in the very same prophecy, their God upbraids them, also, with "slaying the children in the valleys, under the clifts of the rocks."

Now, then, keeping in view that the Phœnicians came and settled themselves here, how easy to conceive of this lofty Stanton Moor being a distinguished seat of idolatrous worship. At one end of the moor, there is an immensely large rock-stone, that has a deep artificial cavity upon its top, subserving the purpose of a socket for an idol, in which accordingly has been placed some idol, say a "sun-image," as the Hebrew Scriptures express it, as the object of worship. Near to it is the Druid priests' stone chair; at

considerable distances from each, on the edge of the clifts of the rocks, and in the view of the valleys below, are large blocks of stone, with the holes and channels on the top for letting off blood, &c. as before mentioned, upon which are offering the sacrifice of the children slain in the valleys under the clifts of the rocks; and in the valley are gathered together an immense multitude of such as are "comers" to the sacrifice. On the moor there is too a circle of stones for worship: so there is at some considerable distance in another part of the valley below. What shall we make of them? Are they places of assembly at the great festivals, or are they, as being on or near the sacred spot, common places of worship? Well, however uncertain may be our conjecture in this, or even though we may err in our conceptions of the whole scene, doubtless this moor was a sacred spot, a spot sacred to Druidical worship; and methinks we hear a voice from heaven, saying to us, when reflecting on this former heathenish state of our land, as God said to Israel, after upbraiding them for their sottish idolatry, "Remember these things, O ye inhabitants of Britain, I have redeemed you; sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it."*

Thus far we have considered those stone monuments of antiquity that have, or appear to have, a connexion with Scripture history, and

* Isa. xliv. 21—23.

on which that Scripture history throws light; but there are other monuments yet remaining to be noticed, which, though they do not appear so nearly connected with the Scripture record, yet perhaps may be considered as having a *remote* connexion with it: for, if we suppose that the sacred regard that has been paid to pillars and rocks and circles of stone, has originated in the Bethel pillar of the patriarch Jacob, we may suppose also that this same idolatrous regard has led to the use of stone rocks for Druids' houses, or Druids' retreats or hermitages or schools, as well as for the rocking-stones and round-towers that are found in these British Isles.

First, we said *Druids' houses*, for these Toland mentions. He says, they are "little arched, round, stone buildings, capable of holding one person." "Here," he adds, "the retired and contemplative Druid sat when his oak could not shelter him from the weather." He tells us, also, that "there was another sort of Druids' houses, much larger." Of both these sorts several remain yet entire in the Isle of Skye, and some other isles, being by the natives called "Tigthenan Druidh neach," that is, Druids' houses. Many of them are to be seen in Wales, and some in Ireland. He, moreover, says, "the vulgar in the islands do still show a great respect for the Druids' houses, and never come to the ancient sacrificing and fire-hallowing carns, but they walk three

times round them from east to west, according to the course of the sun." He speaks of a remarkable one in the island of Kilda, having a room capable of containing nine persons, which, according to the tradition of the place, belonged to a Druidess. Also, of another much larger at Borera, an island adjacent to Kilda, belonging to a Druid.*

Secondly, we conjecture that there are Druids' hermitages that yet remain. One of the sacred collection of rocks mentioned above, the Rootor Rocks, though it may not be called a Druid's house or school, seems to have been a sort of Druids' retreat. We saw in it a passage through which, by stooping low, we passed: a chamber manifestly chiselled out of the hard rock-stone: and in connexion with these rocks there is the sacred rock-idol, with its holes and channels, and the cut-out vase before mentioned, and moreover two rocking stones, used by the Druids, probably, for a purpose we shall presently see. What Toland mentions as distinct from the Druids' houses—their schools—we would call their hermitages. Whether they were for a place of instruction or not, being a sort of hermitage, we cannot determine, but as we learn from Cæsar, and other classical writers, that "the Druids lived in societies, and formed schools."† We shall state the following as fact: that not very far from the road that leads from Rowsley to Bakewell, in the wood or plantation

* Toland, p. 141. † Bray, vol. i. pp. 56, 57.

belonging to Mr. Thornhill, there is a collection of huge rock-stones, confusedly lying together, though yet serving for retreat, called "Giant's Holt," or Hole or Hold (uncertain which), and on the sloping sides of two of those stones, laying obliquely, there are the following inscriptions engraved in Roman capitals, designed most probably as one inscription. That on the left hand begins it, and that on the right seems to continue and conclude it, inasmuch as they express much the same sentiment. It was formerly illegible, although engraved in a very full and fair character, because filled with moss; but not many years since, by order of Mr. Thornhill, it was cleared out; yet some of the letters required our clearing, before we could correctly decipher them.

The following are the inscriptions, if we may consider them as two:

RESRVSTICAQVEMSINEDVBITATI
ONEPROXIMÆQVASICONSANGUINEA
SAPIENTIÆESTTAMDISCENTIBVS
EGETQVAMMINISTRIS

NIHILESTHOMINELIBE
RODIGNIVSETMIHIADSAP
IENTISVITAMPROXIMÆVI
DETVRACCEDERE.

The first inscription we translate thus: "Country retirement, which, without doubt, is nearly allied to wisdom, as if akin to it, will avail as well to those who learn as to those who teach."

And the second, thus: "Nothing is more worthy a free man; and, in my view, it appears above every thing else, to add to the life of a wise man."

The first thing regarding this monument of antiquity is its name, "Giants' Holt." It may be remembered, that Stonehenge is called "Giants' dance" in English, and "Chorea Gigantum" in Latin, probably, as expressive of the ancient Phœnician term, "Choir Gaur:" it may be remembered, also, that formerly (as we think we have shewn to be probable) men of gigantic stature lived on this island. Now, then, is it unreasonable to suppose, that "Giant's Holt," or "Hold," might be the English of some former term indicating that this collection of rocks was originally the residence or resort of such a sort of men? And as to the inscription, though in the Roman character, and probably written when the Romans lived in Britain, yet it might be descriptive of the original design of the building, which it would appear was much the same as that of ancient hermitages for retirement and study, and for instruction to those who sought instruction. Now, where did hermits lodge? "In dark caves; and their food was such roots, &c. that nature bestowed freely without culture."* And

* Dyche's Dict. "Their instructions were instilled into youth in the most private manner: some cave or retired and sacred wood, or some rocky carn, being the appointed place of tuition." Borlase, p. 83. "The children of the nobility," Mele says, "retired withal into caves or the most desolate forests, and they (the Druids) kept them there twenty years under their discipline."—Coetlogon's Cyclopædia, vol. ii. 55.

who that has seen this assemblage of rocks can refuse his assent to the conjecture, that this might have been one. It is true the stones lie quite in a confused state, as many other monuments of antiquity do; but this might arise from the zeal, first, of the Romans, and afterwards of the Christians, in destroying the monuments of Druidism. We will venture, therefore, to give this collection of rock-stones the name of a Druid's hermitage.

Thirdly, we would notice likewise, the *Rocking-stones.* This is a large rock stone, generally rather round, placed upon a flat one, and so poised that it moves with the pressure of the finger or hand, though great strength would not remove it from its position. Amongst the huge blocks of stone that compose the "Rootor Rocks," there are two of this kind: we observed them both to move on pressure, though one of them probably is not less than fifty tons weight. One of them had been moved from its position by fourteen young men, who had assembled for the purpose on Whitsunday, 1799: but since that it has been replaced. Camden mentions these rocking-stones, and speaks of one in Pembrokeshire, in Wales: it is on a sea-cliff, within half a mile of St. David's, so large that, says Owen, his informant, "I presume it may exceed the draught of an hundred oxen." It is "mounted upon divers other stones, about a yard in height; it is so equally poised that a man may shake it with

one finger, so that five or six men, sitting on it, shall perceive themselves moved thereby."* Perhaps the most remarkable one is that in Cornwall, called "the Logan Stone," at Treryn Castle, in the parish of St. Levan. It is supposed to weigh ninety tons, yet is so balanced on an immense pile of rocks that "one individual, by placing his back to it, can move it to and fro easily."† They are found in Ireland, as well as in Cornwall and Wales.‡ The motion of these stones was one thing, probably, by which the Druids awed the minds of the vulgar. And our first impression was, that they might be used as a sort of ordeal; and Toland says, on what ground he does not state, that "by this pretended miracle they condemned of perjury or acquitted as their interest or affection led them; and often brought criminals to confess what could be no other way extorted from them."§ This reminds us of a law of Moses: "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the

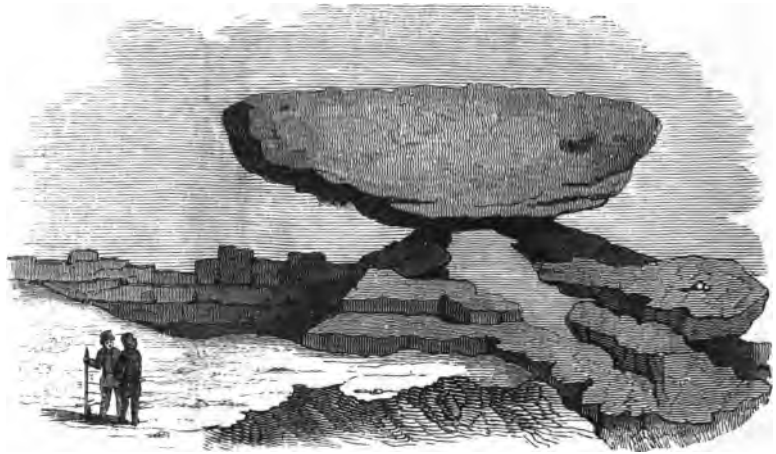
* Camden, p. 638.

† Stockdale's Excursions in Cornwall, p. 69.

‡ Moore's Ireland, p. 39.

§ Bray, in his "Parts of Devonshire," &c. says, "Rocking or Logan stones were probably resorted to for condemnation or acquittal, or as ordeals of the accused."—Vol. i. pp. 153. 244.

To face Page 66.



A ROCKING STONE.
From Borlase's Cornwall.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

priests, the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire, and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment." Now might not these rocking-stones be employed by the Druidical priests for pronouncing the "sentence of judgment," when applied to in matters of controversy? These stones were not unnoticed by the ancients. Says Pliny, "Juxta Horpesa oppidum Asiæ cauter stat horrenda, una digito mobilis: eadem, si toto corpore impellatur, resistans." That is, "near Horpesa, a town of Asia, there stands a dreadful rock, moveable with one finger; the same immovable by the whole body." Moreover, while some thought that it was moved by a divine power, others thought it was moved by some demon. Says Photius, in his Life of Isidore, "I indeed thought that the use of the Baitylion was rather of divine appointment; but Isidore said that it was rather from the devil, for that some demon moved it."* And such, formerly, seems to have been the opinion of the superstitious vulgar in more modern times. Toland, however, quoting from another writer, says, that the rocking-stone near Balvaird "was broken by Cromwell's soldiers; and it was discovered, then, that its motion was performed by a yolk exuberant in the middle of the under-surface of

* "Εγω μεν ωμην θειοτερον ειναι το χρημα του βαιτυλου· ωδε Ισιδωρος δαιμονιον μαλλον ελεγεν· ειναι· γαρ τινα δαιμονα τον κινουντα αυτον." Vita Isidori, apud Photium, in Moore's Ireland, p. 39.

the upper stone, which was inserted in a cavity in the surface of the lower stone." To which Toland himself adds, further to account for it, "as the lower stone was flat, so the upper stone was globular; and that not only a just proportion in the motion was calculated from the weight of the stone, and the wideness of the cavity, as well as the oval figure of the inserted prominence; but that the vast bulk of the upper stone did absolutely conceal the mechanism of the motion; and the better still to impose, there were two or three surrounding flat stones, though that only in the middle was concerned in the feat."*

We shall conclude this branch of our subject by remarking, that Bryant seems to consider these rocking-stones as designed for religious memorials. "It was usual," says he, "among the Egyptians, to place with much labour one vast stone upon another, for a religious memorial. The stones they thus placed they sometimes poised so equally that they were affected with the least external force; nay, a breath of wind would sometimes make them vibrate."† But let the reader judge.

The *Round Towers* of Ireland. These have excited great attention. They are round conic buildings, from one hundred and twenty feet high to a much lesser height, and from fifty to sixty feet in circumference. They are smooth inside, like gun-

* Toland, p. 140.

† Bryant, Anal. Mythol. vol. iii. in Moore, p. 39.

barrels, covered with a conical stone, beneath which there are four small windows, corresponding to the cardinal points of the heavens; and you enter by a door nine or ten feet from the ground. It is said that there are the remains of one hundred of them in all Ireland, and fifty that are perfect. Moore, in his "Ireland," notices the different hypotheses that have been advanced concerning them; and, after having shewed, satisfactorily, that they were not raised by the Danes, as some have supposed; that they were not places of confinement for penitents, as others; or for beacons or watch-towers, as a third class suppose; he states his opinion that they were originally fire-temples. But we should rather consider them as objects of idolatrous worship, or rallying places for such worship. And since we shall, we presume, make it appear that the religion of the British Isles was that of the Phœnicians, we conjecture that they are imitations of those Round Towers found in Phœnicia, and of which the authors of the "Universal History" have given a description and a draught in their first vol. pp. 396 and 397. Moreover, if the Colossus of Rhodes was built in honour of Apollo, the Sun, why not these towers? *

Thus have we taken a review of the several monuments of antiquity, the altar or cromlech,

* On these "Round Towers," a dissertation may be seen in the Appendix.

the carn-altar, the pillar or obelisk, the circular temples, the pillars to serve as marks or memorials, the carns or heaps of stones, the barrows and the rock-idols that are to be found in these British Isles, and have shewn that the sacred writings throw considerable light on their origin and use. We have also treated of the Druids' chair, the Druids' house or hermitage, likewise of the Rocking Stone, and the Round Towers of Ireland, considering them as having a remote connexion with the rest. We shall now conclude with two or three reflections.

First, what book so venerable for its antiquity as the Scripture? We travel abroad and observe a huge stone, at some time immemorial placed for a pillar or obelisk; then a circle of these pillars, and indeed two or three circles of them on the same spot; now we notice a huge cromlech, then a carn, here a barrow, and there a stupendous rock-stone long held in veneration, and we wonder and inquire whence their origin? for what purpose reared? And whence do we derive the most satisfactory replies to these inquiries? We think we have by this essay shewn that they are to be found in the Scriptures; and, with reference to some of these extraordinary objects, only in the Scriptures. And why? Because, as the most ancient records in the world, they record things most ancient. Herodotus, the father of history, wrote only about four or five hundred before

Christ. Homer and Hesiod, the oldest poets, a thousand years before Christ; but Moses wrote about fifteen hundred years before the Christian era commenced. There are fragments of other histories preserved in Josephus, in Eusebius, such as Sanchoniathon the Phœnician, and Berosus the Chaldean; but even those writers whose fragments are preserved by later writers, even the earliest of them was seven or eight hundred years after Moses. The Bible, then, is the resource of the antiquary; and what book so venerable for its hoary antiquity?

Not only is the Bible venerable as supplying the first and only satisfactory information concerning these monuments of antiquity, but also as giving the same with regard to the origin of those idolatrous practices which have had so extensive and powerful an influence in the world. Seventeen hundred years before Christ we have in the book of Job, the oldest writer in the world, mention of the sun and moon as existing objects of worship. Fifteen hundred years before the Christian epoch, we are given to understand, by Moses, that men worshipped the sun and moon, and the host of heaven, and that they bowed down to images and statues; yea, to the likenesses of men, of beasts, of fowls, of creeping things; yea, more, even of their offering sons and daughters to Moloch, or the Sun, as king of the heaven, or to Baal, as lord of the heavens; so, of

the impurities connected with their idol worship; also of their diviners, observers of times, enchanters, witches, charmers, consulters with familiar spirits, wizards, necromancers. Nor is that all, the Scriptures give us an account of the *occasion* of these things. "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." Here is the origin of their idolatry; and then there follows the origin of those abominations that connected themselves with it, which the reader may see by referring to the passage. God being provoked, "gave them up to their own hearts' lusts;" and not liking to retain God in their knowledge, he also gave them up to the indulgence of all sorts of crimes, and these crimes as the consequence of forsaking him.

Thus venerable are the Scriptures for the information they give us of the origin and occasion of things: but that which should render them more interesting is, that they supply us with an antidote to the wide-spreading evils. From thence shines forth a light which dispels the darkness. There is a salvation from the idolatry and immorality; in short, we have there "grace abound-

ing over all through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord," to all those who " receive the abounding grace and the gift of righteousness."

Secondly. The foregoing essay, it is presumed, will add another collateral proof to the truth of Revelation, inasmuch as it shews how those ancient records agree with existing facts. Do we read of a Jacob raising a pillar as a place of worship; of his raising another as a memorial of a beloved wife; do we see him, again, placing heaps of stones for boundaries? The same customs appear even in the British Isles to this day. Do we read of a Moses causing twelve pillars to be placed at one time, and twelve stones at another for sacred purposes? We see the same custom has obtained in our own country. Do we read of a king of Ai—of an Achar—of an Absalom, as marked with infamy by a heap of stones being piled over them? We find that so it has been in these northern countries; and our essay has shewn us how also these customs obtained a footing here: and does not all this serve to confirm the truth of that ancient record? May it please the great Author of all Good to bless it, therefore, for the purpose of augmenting our esteem of that inestimable treasure, as well as of gratifying a laudable curiosity, and of enlarging the mind!

When the situation was favourable, and rocks pre-

sented themselves that might be excavated, it is not an improbable supposition that they would make excavations in such rocks for the purposes above mentioned; and this may account for such artificial caves as are found near the castle, and on the south-eastern side of the park, at Nottingham. These caves are called "Rock-holes," and "Papists'-holes," and more recently, "Druids'-holes." There are several of them on the side of the river Leer, and those most considerable have a direct southern aspect. Two or three of those have chimnies, though, in consequence of the ground being made good on the top of the rocks, the light does not appear from the sky. In connexion with these excavations, it must be considered that the country before and around it was, in those days, covered with oaks, and the scene must be that of a forest. Now the Druidical priests made their abode in oak forests; what, then, can be more natural than to suppose that this was the residence of the Druidical priests, as connected with Nottingham and the surrounding country; and that here they delivered their instructions and their oracles? The forest of oak,—the southern aspect, not only rendering it warm, but presenting to them the sun, the object of their worship,—the river Leer supplying them with water,—and the contiguity to Nottingham,—all render the supposition reasonable. But, as we are upon the subject of these caves, it may

be allowed us to suggest, that, if they are not Druidical caves, they are caves of retreat for refuge from invading enemies or persecuting foes, during the many invasions and persecutions that these isles have undergone. We read in Scripture of many facts illustrative of this idea, at least. The five kings that warred against Gibeon, "hid themselves in a cave."* When "the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel," "the children of Israel made them dens in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds."† And when an immense host of the Philistines came up against Israel, "the people did hide themselves in caves and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits."‡ The same in cases of persecution, "they wandered in dens and caves of the earth."§ So likewise they might do in this country, even though such refuges were not of Phœnician origin;‖ and, possibly, this might be the original design of these caves. But the reader will judge for himself, after that the author has just remarked, that "prophets" were "hid by fifty in a cave" by Obadiah, in the time of the persecution by Jezebel;¶ a remark which, perhaps, may bear favourably on the former hypothesis.

* Josh. x. 16. † Judg. vi. 2.
‡ 1 Sam. xiii. 6. § Heb. xi. 38.
‖ Of this origination, see further on.
¶ 1 Kings, xviii. 4 and 13.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGION OF THE BRITISH ISLES, IN THE DAYS OF HEATHENISM, AND THAT OF THE PHŒNICIANS, MUCH THE SAME; AND THAT THEREFORE THESE ANTIQUITIES ARE OF PHŒNICIAN ORIGIN.

In directing our attention to the subject before us, an inquiry naturally arises in the mind, especially of one not much accustomed to historical research, how can monuments of antiquity, existing in these British Isles, so remote from that part of the world where the Scriptures were written, have any connexion with the Scripture narrative? If, however, we can make it appear, first, that there was an intercourse between Israel and the Phœnicians; then, that the Phœnicians had intercourse and formed settlements here; and, lastly, that Phœnicians, particularly their magi or wise men, introduced their religion wherever they thus formed settlements, the difficulty, it is presumed, will be removed, and the inquiry answered. To these points we shall, therefore, direct our attention.

Phœnicia was a country that bordered on the

Mediterranean Sea, and was so contiguous to the land of Israel, that the lot of Ashur, according to Moses, went out "unto Zidon," and its coast "turned to the strong city Tyre," two of its principal and trading cities. It is easy to conceive, therefore, how intercourse might be maintained between the Phœnicians and Israelites. That it really was so, appears from several considerations. So early as the time of Israel's first conquest and possession of the land, which was near fifteen hundred years before Christ, we find that Sidonians were left amongst them, as well as people of other nations; and while the contiguity of the land of Israel, in the time of David, to that of the Phœnicians, is proved by the circumstance that when Jacob went out to number the people of Israel, he is said to "come to Zidon and to the strong hold of Tyre," its intercourse is likewise proved from the intimacy subsisting between David, king of Israel, and Hiram, king of Tyre. The latter, it is said, "was always a lover of David," and he sent David cedar-trees and masons, to build a house for himself. The same friendship subsisted between king Solomon and Hiram; for when Solomon sent Hiram a message to inform him of his intention to build a temple to the name of Jehovah, he provided him with timber from Lebanon, and sent him a man skilful to assist him in building it. More than this, the sacred historian informs us, that Hiram sent Solomon "by the

hands of his servants, ships and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon."

Now the Sidonians, and other nations that lived amongst the Israelites, would naturally attempt to introduce their customs to their notice and regard; and such was their success, that we find Israel did, in fact, to their cost, and ultimately to their ruin, imitate the manners and adopt the idolatrous customs of these nations. Amongst these customs were those of erecting stone pillars as objects of worship—worshipping Baal, the Sun —causing to pass through the fire to their gods—sacrificing and burning incense in high places, and planting groves around them. So, on the other hand, the Phœnicians would learn from Israel to cherish a superstitious veneration for the oak, to set stones in circles for places of general assembly, for public worship, and for other public purposes. All these things appear naturally to arise from such mutual intercourse. And if so, the historical records of the people of Israel would, of course, make mention of them; and such, we find, is the case in the Old Testament Scripture.

But, then, how should they pass from the Phœnicians or Israelites to us? This is the second branch of the inquiry, to which we now apply ourselves.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, informs us, that the first colonizing expeditions were formed by water, not by land. Keeping this in view, we shall more easily account for the intercourse of the Phœnicians with us, and at length of the introduction of their customs. Phœnicia, including particularly Tyre and Sidon, was the first maritime country of which we have any record, either in sacred or profane history. Tyre, "the daughter of Zidon," it is well known was, as is declared by Ezekiel, "the mart of nations," and had intercourse, as is intimated by the same prophet, "with all the kingdoms of the earth." With reference to the subject before us, we conclude, therefore, that they extended their commerce, first to the isles of the Mediterranean—from thence to Spain,—and then upward to our British Isles; a thing which will by no means appear improbable to those, who, after looking at a map, consider their skill in navigation, their dependence upon it, and their commercial and adventurous spirit. Nor are we left to conjecture on this head, for we have ample testimony from ancient history, both common and sacred, to prove the existence of such a commercial intercourse. Hence we find, that, in regard to the isles of the Mediterranean, they formed settlements in Cyprus; and Citicum, according to Josephus, was the principal settlement of the Tyrians upon this island. Cicero says, that it was a Phœnician colony, and, accord-

ing to Diodorus Siculus, "the cities of the isle of Cyprus are nearly all of Phœnician origin. So the island of Crete. And, in accordance with these ancient testimonies, it appears that traces of the Phœnicians in Crete are preserved in the mythology of the island; and the cities of the isle of Rhodes, Jalyssus, Cernirus, and Lindus, not only were traded with, but followed the Phœnician worship.* The Balearic islands, too, Majorca, Minorca, and Yvica, were, according to Diodorus Siculus, occupied by the Phœnicians one hundred and fifty years after the building of Carthage. Now all this is in exact agreement with Scripture. The name for these isles of Greece, according to Newton and others of our best authors, of late particularly Heeren, is, in Scripture, "Chittim;" so called from Chittim, one of the sons of Javan, a son of Japheth, by whom these places were originally peopled. They had traded there before, and many of their countrymen, probably, had previously settled amongst them; and, therefore, with propriety, might they attempt to form settlements in these islands. And that, before the fall of Tyre, Chittim, or these Mediterranean isles, had intercourse; and that Tyre probably had formed settlements, appears from the circumstance that it was from Chittim the fall of this Tyre was to be made known to Tarshish; for, according to the prophet Isaiah, when foretelling its downfall, they were to

* Heeren's Historical Researches.

give information to "Tarshish," that there was in consequence no house, "no entering in," no harbour for their shipping, as there had formerly been. And then, when the event was to take place, the Tyrians are directed by the same prophet to fly and take refuge in Chittim:—"O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zion (Tyre had sprung from Zidon), arise, pass over to Chittim;" that is, go and seek settlements there, being driven out of Tyre; there many of thy countrymen have long since settled, and there thou mayest reasonably expect rest. It is true the prophet adds, "there also thou shalt have no rest;" and we shall presently avail ourselves of the declaration. Yet, from the expression, "pass over to Chittim," especially in connexion with the circumstance that they were to make known to Tarshish Tyre's overthrow, we may infer, that the Phœnician Tyrus had commercial intercourse with the islands of the Mediterranean at that time, viz. about seven hundred and fifteen years before Christ. To this Scripture testimony, we may add that of ecclesiastical history. "We have read," says Jerome, "that when the Tyrians were besieged, after they saw no hope of escaping, they went on board the ships, and fled to Carthage, or to some island of the Ionian and Egean Sea." Now these latter were "the isles of Chittim," isles in the Mediterranean. Again, says the same author, "when the Tyrians saw that the works carrying on the

siege were perfected, and the foundations of the walls were shaken by the battering rams, whatsoever precious things in gold, silver, clothes, and various kinds of furniture, the nobility had, they put them on board their ships and carried to the islands, so that the city being taken, Nebuchadnezzar found nothing worthy of his labour." A remark, by the way, that confirms the prophecy of Ezekiel, that since Nebuchadnezzar had no wages for his army from Tyre, that "Egypt should be the wages for his army."

Thus we see from ancient history, sacred and profane, as well as ecclesiastical, that the Phœnicians had commercial intercourse with the Mediterranean or Grecian Isles, which was the thing we first proposed to prove.

Now, as to their commerce being extended yet farther to Spain, we not only infer it from the evidence that will hereafter be adduced of their commercial intercourse with these British Isles, which was yet farther—Spain being in the way,—but from the express testimony of ancient history, as confirmed by Scripture. Of the heathen writers we shall adduce the testimony of Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, and Pliny. The former declares, that "a numerous fleet assembled at Crete, the object of which was Spain;" and it seems that the southern and western parts of it became the source of Phœnician wealth, and the principal seat of its trade.* And "Spain submitted, and the Tyrian

* Heeren, p. 32, 33.

traders took their way back through Gaul, Italy, and the islands of Sicily and Sardinia." Strabo's testimony is, that the Phœnicians, even before Homer—who lived nine hundred years before the coming of Christ,—had possessed themselves of the best part of Spain.* And from the same writer it appears, that Spain was then the richest country in the world for silver;† that she abounded in gold, and in the less precious metals: the most productive mines were found in the districts which were comprised by the Phœnicians under the general name of Tartessus, or Tarshish. Pliny, too, declares, that Gades, now Cadiz, was peopled from the Tyrians. With these testimonies Heeren agrees, who shews that "the most lively intercourse with Spain existed in the most flourishing period of Tyre, and of Phœnicia in general."

We are now to confirm the same from Scripture. How often is Tarshish, or Spain, mentioned in the prophecies concerning Tyre; and how is Tarshish called upon to lament the downfall of Tyre? And why? Because she had been so enriched by commercial intercourse with her. Hear the prophet Isaiah—"The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for it is laid waste; so that

* "Τους δε Φοινικας λεγω μηνυτας· και της Ιβεριας και της Λιβυης την αριστην ουτοι κατεχον προ της ηλικιας Ομηρου." Strab. lib. iii. in Moore's Ireland.

† Here note what Scripture says in Jer. x. 9. "Silver is brought in plates from Tarshish."

there is no house, no entering in." And afterwards the inhabitants of Tyre are exhorted to "pass over to Tarshish." And then again, says the prophet, in the name of the Lord, "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your strength is laid waste." Why? Because she could no longer traffic with Tyre, and enrich herself by her. Nor, with the light of Scripture, need we be altogether at a loss in reference to the occasion of this commercial intercourse with these isles and with Spain. Look at the country which the Phœnicians, including the Sidonians, Tyrians, Canaanites, &c. occupied: it was bordering on the Mediterranean, and it is well known that the land which the children of Israel possessed was bounded on the west by this Mediterranean sea. Now, it is worthy of remark, that the inhabitants of this country, of which Israel took possession, are uniformly said, not to have been destroyed, but "*driven out*," "cast out," &c.* The places that so state it are innumerable. If, therefore they were "driven out," they must fly somewhere. What, then, can be more probable than that they availed themselves of their shipping, and their knowledge of navigation, to escape to some distant country, and that they found their way to the isles of the Mediterranean, and at length to Spain? However, it is a remarkable fact, that Moore, in his "Ireland,"

* Exod. xxxiv. 24; Judges, xvii. 18; Joshua, xiii. 4; xxiii. 5, 9, 13; Psa. lxxviii. 55.

tells us, from Procopius, that there was an inscription legible for many an age on the two pillars near the fount of the Magi, at Tangiers, running thus:—"We fly from the face of Joshua, the robber." *

Sammes' account of this, in his "Britannia Antiqua," is thus stated:—"Two pillars," says he, "were found in the kingdom of Tangier, upon the Streights, with a Phœnician inscription, thus:—

WE FLY FROM THE
FACE OF JOSHUA, THE
SON OF NAVE, THE
ROBBER.†

We see, then, that Phœnicia had commercial intercourse, not only with the isles of the Mediterranean, but also yet further, with Spain; and we gather it both from profane and sacred history.

* Procop. Vandal. lib. ii. c. 10, in Moore, p. 9.

† Sammes' Britannia, p. 141. The same Sammes, treating of "the Original and Antiquity of the Phœnicians in Britain," makes the following remark:—"The cause of making the Phœnicians so early mariners, was not only through their ambition of empire, and particular genius to navigation and merchandize, but through necessity of inventing the best and safest way of escaping the hands of Joshua, who persecuted them with an army of Israelites; who, after they had made themselves masters of most part of the land of Canaan, they were driven up into a slender nook of earth, too narrow to contain so great and numerous a body, disceded themselves into good shipping, to seek their fortunes in most parts of the world, of whose company Britain received a considerable share." P. 73.

Nor did it stop there—it passed up to the *British Isles.* Whoever considers the character of the Phœnicians, will not be surprised that they should extend their researches and connexions even so far. Even in Isaiah's time, they are represented as trading with all the kingdoms of the earth; and he calls her "the mart of nations." Nor ought the then existing state of navigation to form an objection, for it was not necessary for them to cross wide oceans for the purpose. And if it had been, that circumstance would have furnished no greater difficulty than the accounting for the population of the islands of the vast Pacific Ocean. But, in fact, we have reason to believe that the Phœnicians, considering their scientific attainments, as declared both in Scripture and in profane history, had a much greater share of nautical skill than we in our pride are ready to admit. However, we shall, as before, produce our evidence of the fact of the connexion of the Phœnicians with these British Isles; first, from profane history, and then from Scripture. Strabo, the celebrated heathen geographer, declares, not only that Tyre sent forth colonies into Spain, and to the Pillars of Hercules, but *beyond* them; yea, expressly, that the Phœnicians began a commerce with the Britons, and that they alone carried on a commerce with them; and he afterwards enters into the details of this commerce. "The Phœnicians," says he, "imported into Bri-

tain earthenware, salt, all sorts of instruments of iron and brass; and they received in exchange shoes, leather, and tin, and the single article of tin (the mines of which abound in Cornwall) was an inexhaustible source of wealth to the Phœnicians." To this testimony of Strabo we add that of Quintus Curtius, that the colonies of Tyre, as well as her trade, "were diffused almost over the whole world." Founded on such testimonies as these, we suppose it is, that Sabbathier says, "that the Phœnicians carried on a trade with Great Britain;" and he remarks, "that for a long time they were the only people that did so, and that they imported tin from the islands, which were called by the ancients Cassiterides."* And the authors of the "Ancient Universal History" say, that the Phœnicians had settlements and correspondence with the British Isles, commonly understood by "the Cassiterides." So again Sharon Turner, that Britain was peopled not only by the Kimmerians and Keltoi, but also by the Phœnicians, partly those of the original Tyrians, and partly by Carthaginians, a colony of Tyre, who also traded† here. ‡

* From the Greek word *κασσιτερον*, tin.

† Turner's Hist. Angl. Sax. vol. i. p. 53.

‡ Sammes has shewn largely that much of the language of the ancient Britons was Phœnician; and Borlase, in his Antiquities, says, that "many words in the present British are evidently of Tyrian derivation." P. 31.

We now appeal to Scripture. What light does that ancient and sacred record throw upon this subject? In that interesting document in Ezekiel's prophecies, which speaks of Tyre as "a merchant of the people for many isles," we find that Tarshish was her "merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches;" and that "with silver, iron, *tin*, and lead they traded in her fairs." Now Tarshish, as we have seen, was Spain; and whence probably did Spain get her "tin and lead" but from Britain, especially her tin, which is well known to have been the produce of the south-west of Britain, even of Cornwall, and indeed still is so. Moreover, when, on the overthrow of Tyre, the prophet Isaiah charges Tyre to pass over to Chittim, the isles of the Mediterranean, he adds, "there thou shalt have no rest." If so, then, would they not seek it elsewhere? How natural to suppose that they would sail farther on to seek rest, perhaps in Spain, perhaps farther still, in the British Isles, prompted to it probably by learning in the former place that there were those mines of tin in the latter, whence Spain, or Tarshish, had supplied herself. Scripture, then, seems to accord at least with profane history on the commercial intercourse of Phœnicia and Britain. "Indeed," say the authors of the Universal History, "their whole thoughts were how to advance their trade. They affected no empire but that of the sea. They sought to enlarge no other dominion. They traded

to all the known ports they could reach, or knew the way to. The British Isles, commonly understood by the Cassiterides, Spain, other places in the ocean, both to the north and south of the Straits' mouth, in general all the ports of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the lake Mæotis; in all these ports they had settlements and correspondence, from all which they drew what was useful to themselves, or might be so to others reciprocally."*

On the whole, then, we may conclude, that the ancient Phœnicians not only had intercourse but formed settlements in these islands;† and, with Turner, in his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," "that the British Isles were peopled partly by the Phœnicians." Indeed, what through their expulsion by Joshua, then their flight from Nebuchadnezzar, afterwards from Alexander, we may easily conceive that the Grecian isles, Spain, Gaul, and Britain, would, at least, receive great additions to their population; which might be still more increased in consequence of the conquest of the Carthaginians by the Romans. Nor is it at all

* Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 405.

† Campbell, in his Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland, speaking of the brazen swords that have been dug out in Ireland, says, "What makes these brazen swords such a valuable remnant to the Irish antiquarian is, they serve to corroborate the opinion that the Phœnicians once had footing in this kingdom." Moore, p. 198.

improbable, that the religion of these isles would receive much of its character from them. And this brings us to the third branch of our inquiry,

Did the Phœnicians, and particularly their priesthood, or magi,* introduce their *religion* into Britain? Here, as before, we shall have recourse, first, to ancient profane history, and then see how far Scripture will corroborate its testimony. Strabo, then, says expressly, that the Phœnicians carried their religion into far distant regions. Nor can we wonder at this, if, as Pliny says, "the Phœnician nation was so eminent for science and learning, for the first invention of letters, and for their knowledge in astrology, navigation, and martial skill.† And since, when, according to Jerome, as before quoted, Tyre was besieged, their nobility are said to have left it, among whom we may rank the magi or priests, we may naturally conclude, that of these some would arrive here, and that consequently they would, by gaining an ascendancy over the minds of the uncultivated

* Moore, in his History of Ireland, derives the word Druid from Draoid in Irish, signifying "a cunning man, or magus:" and he says, that, in an Irish version of the gospel of St. Matthew, the expression "the wise men came from the East," is rendered, "the Druids came from the East." So, "the magicians of Egypt," the "Druids of Egypt." And the author of "the Travels of a British Druid," derives the name from "Druidh," which signifies, as he says, "wise man."

† Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. xii.

inhabitants, prevail with them to adopt their imposing religion. It does not appear, therefore, without reason, that Heeren, a late very respectable author, remarks, that "the worship of the Tyrian deity was introduced into the most distant parts of the world to which that people penetrated and founded settlements;" especially, as he further on remarks, in reference to "the relations of Tyre with her colonies," that "religion furnished a strong band, which knit the whole together by the effect of common feasts and sacrifices." Lord Herbert, in his "Religion of the Gentiles," says, "it is very probable that religious worship came from the Phœnicians into the West;" and afterwards he remarks, from Strabo, that "they carried their religion into far distant regions." Sharon Turner, also, argues, that if the Druidical system was the creation of a more civilised people, none of the colonies of Britain are so likely to have been its parents as the Phœnicians and Carthaginians. And the argument drawn from the superior civilisation of the Phœnicians, as influencing the natives to receive their religion, receives strength from Scripture; for there Tyre, the capital, is represented as famed for wisdom, as well as for its influence over the nations. Thus she is said to be "very wise;" and the prince of Tyrus, it seems, considered himself at least, if not really so, as "wiser than Daniel," as corrupting his wisdom

because of his brightness; and the expressions there used concerning him, not only imply, but appear to be designed to convey, the idea that the people were also eminent for wisdom. According to Isaiah, her merchants, too, were "princes, and her traffickers were the honourable of the earth." And when God purposes her overthrow, he is said to do it "to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth." Now, if such people as these should "arise and pass over to Chittim," or to "Tarshish," or to the British Isles, from Tyre immediately, or from Tarshish or Spain to those British Isles, we might suppose that they would not only wish to take their religion with them, but that their claim to antiquity, to science, and to the arts, would enable them to do so. And with this sentiment Sir I. Newton seems to concur; for, says he, "With these Phœnicians came a sort of men skilled in religious mysteries."* To all this may be added the consideration, that it appears from what has been before stated, that the Mediterranean Isles did receive their religion from these Phœnicians; and if they did, why should not the British Isles do so?

Thus, in conclusion, it appears, as proposed for consideration, first, that an intercourse subsisted

* See Moore, p. 13, note.

between the Phœnicians and Israelites, in consequence of which the records of the latter, as contained in the Scriptures, might with propriety be referred to for Phœnician customs; secondly, that these Phœnicians had commercial intercourse with, and formed settlements in, the British Isles; and, lastly, that the Phœnician priesthood, or magi, introduced their religion here. And, in further evidence of the whole, and particularly of the latter position, we will add, the *identity* of the customs of the Phœnicians and Britons. Were the Phœnicians accustomed to erect pillars of stone as memorials and objects of worship? So were the Britons. Did the Phœnicians gather heaps of stones for certain purposes? So, in the isles of Britain we find these heaps, or carns. Had they their altars of rough unhewn stone? So had the Britons. Did the Phœnicians sacrifice to the Sun under the name of Baal? The same deity was worshipped under the name Bel, Beal, Belinus, and Apollo. Did they cause human beings to pass through the fire to their gods; and did they offer human sacrifices? So did the inhabitants of these isles. Were there assemblages of stones placed in a circular form for sacred purposes in that country? So they were in these Britannic Isles, and such circles remain unto this day. Did they in that country venerate, as sacred, the oak, and worship in groves? It was the same

here. Was Tyre famed for its "harps" and its "songs?" So were the ancient Britons; and so are the Welsh, their descendants, to this day. Did the Phœnicians and the people of the East reckon the day from evening to morning? So did the Druids. Did they measure by the cubit? So did the Druids.* Had they "castles?" They were common in this country. Did they carry on their wars with chariots? So did the ancient Britons.

Having now, then, shewn that the religion of Britain derived its origin from Phœnicia, or that the Druidical or Heathen worship formerly existing in the British Isles was the same as obtained amongst the Phœnicians, we are prepared to see how those remains of antiquity amongst us that

* The offering of the cake is another ceremony in which the Britons resembled the Phœnicians and the idolatrous Hebrews, as learning from them. Indeed the word "sacrifice," in Gaelic, is composed of two words, which signify, "the offering of the cake." This offering consists of a quantity of flour, milk, and eggs, and some few herbs and simples. It has still existence in several parts of North Britain. Now, how naturally does this remind us of the practice of the Jews in Jeremiah's time:— "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger." Jer. vii. 17, 18. And in ch. xliv. 19, the women themselves say that it was to "worship" her.

are considered to be the monuments of the religion of the Britons, might be of Phœnician origin; and, as taking their origin from certain facts recorded in Scripture, serve, incidentally, to confirm those Scriptures, while it may gratify the curiosity of the antiquary.

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fore, the author should fail in his attempt to lift up the veil which has hidden this mystery from us, criticism must not be severe, especially as he never should have attempted it, had not circumstances perfectly incidental, or shall he not say contingently providential, prompted him to it. In the course of his readings, he has noticed such and such monuments of antiquity; in his course of Scripture reading, it has repeatedly occurred to him that certain historic facts there recorded would account for their erection; and, solicitous to ascertain the accordance, he has examined some of these monuments, and compared them again and again with Scripture statements. The result of the whole has been, a conviction that these remains of antiquity, many of them at least, have indeed their origin in those facts. Moreover, that not only does this record throw greater light than any other upon these remains, but that there is no book in the world besides that will remove the veil of obscurity that hangs over them. Hence the attempt in a former chapter concerning the altars or cromlechs—the pillars or obelisks—the carns or heaps—and the circles of stones, or clachans, found in these northern isles—hence this plain, but well-meant effort, in regard to the monument of Stonehenge. And a right understanding of the two former chapters, will, it is presumed, prepare the way for a correct judgment with regard to the subject before us.

In the discussion of a topic of this kind, the great desideratum, next to truth, is perspicuity. We shall, therefore, conscientiously cherish a regard to the former, and shall studiously attempt the latter. Perhaps no method can be more perspicuous than to treat, in order, of the nature of the extraordinary structure in question; its design; and the use that was made of it by the ancient Britons. These, therefore, we shall attempt.

Stonehenge is situated on a vast plain* in Wiltshire, perhaps not much less than one hundred miles in circumference, called "Salisbury Plain," about five miles from Salisbury. As a building, it is a collection of rude stones, of immense size, placed on the ground at a distance from each other, in a circular form, four times repeated, having a circle within a circle, the two

* Although the Phœnicians and Israelites worshipped in common in groves, under thick trees, oaks, &c. yet Stonehenge, being their "eminent place," intended as a place of general assembly, it is not necessary that we should consider *it* as being formerly situated in a grove, for indeed then it would not be a place fit for a general assembly; it is sufficient for our hypothesis of its being a place of worship, as will be seen hereafter, that it is upon a remarkably elevated place, as Salisbury down is. What is said by Bryan concerning the human sacrifices in the Hercynian forests, and what we have said concerning Staunton Moor, &c. will sufficiently illustrate and confirm the idea that Druidical worship in common was in groves and woods, although this, as a place of general assembly, might be in a plain. After all, however, Keysler, in Borlase's Antiquities of Cornwall, is stated to have said, "Even Stonehenge itself stood formerly in a grove, according to tradition." Borlase, p. 83.

inner ones, however, being rather oval—some standing in their original position, others fallen; many taken away; while the position of the remaining stones is such as to enable an attentive observer to define the circles. It has an avenue at the north-east—is also surrounded by a mound or trench at a considerable distance; and about half a mile from it, there is an hippodrome, or circus. Moreover, there are around it a great number of barrows or heaps, under which have been interred human bodies, accompanied with the insignia of their rank or occupation in life. Such is the general view of the structure, and of the places connected with it. As taken by Inigo Jones, one hundred and eighty years since, the building consisted of two circles and two ovals regular and exact, with a large stone in the adytum, or most sacred place. But, although the building in the time of that celebrated architect might then be reduced in imagination to its regular form, and representations of it have been accordingly given by different writers, as supposed to exist in its original state, yet it presents a very irregular appearance to a spectator at first sight, a great number of the stones having been taken away, all being more or less worn by time, and many having fallen * or been thrown down, probably by the Britons themselves, after they had become Christians, according to the command

* Two or three years since one or two fell down, as the author was informed on the spot.

given to the ancient Israelites concerning the idolatrous altars found in the land of Canaan. Yet, upon closer examination, as intimated before, you may ascertain the circles, and satisfy yourself that it was originally a regularly constructed building. The whole structure is one hundred and ten feet in diameter, and being composed of rough stones placed in a circular and oval form, of course, leaves it open to the heavens; for, in the early ages of the world, they did not worship in covered buildings, but in places open to the heavens. As to its *particular* description, we prefer that of Sir R. C. Hoare, in his "History of Wiltshire," not only as the latest we have seen,* but as being brief and perspicuous, adding, however, a remark or two. "This temple," says he, "consists of two circles and two ovals; the two latter constituting the cell, or sanctum. The outward circle, about three hundred feet in circumference, is composed of huge upright stones, bearing others over them, which form a kind of architrave. Though they evidently show the mark of tools, they are still irregular in their forms and sizes. The height of the stones on each side of the entrance is a little more than thirteen feet; and the breadth of one seven feet, and of the other six feet four inches: the impost over them is about two feet eight inches deep. The space between the stones in this outward circle varies; that between the entrance stones is five feet, and rather

* A.D. 1812.

wider than in the rest. This circle consisted originally of thirty stones, of which seventeen still remain standing. At the distance of eight feet three inches from the inside of this outward circle, we find another composed of smaller stones, rude and irregular in their shapes, but in form pyramidal. We come now to the grandest part of our temple, the cell, or sanctum; in forming which the general plan has been varied; for this inner temple represents two-thirds of a large oval, and a concomitant small oval: as in the outward temple, we find a large and a small circle. The large oval is formed by five pair of trilithons, or two large upright stones with a third over them as an impost. The placing of the imposts is also varied, for they are not continued all round, as in the outward circle, but are divided into pairs, thereby giving a great lightness to the work, and breaking its uniformity; neither are they like those of the outward circle, parallel at top, but they rise gradually in height from east to west." So far Sir Richard; but he omits the innermost oval, which we shall supply from the "Universal History:"*—"Within this grand oval," say they, "is another of much lesser, though broader and finer stones. This circle, together with the long stone, now broken, which is supposed to have been the altar, is of a darkish blue marble, such as is often set upon common altar-tombs, and about sixteen feet in length, consists of

* Vol. vii. 346.

twenty stones, the greatest part of which are sadly mangled, but not so much as to hinder a curious observer from recovering the form and order in which they stood."

We shall now give our own statement, as taken in July 1834. 1st. The situation of the building appeared to be on a plain, in the form of a plate with its border or edge—the building in the middle, and the barrows on the border. 2nd. It consisted of four circles; and, beginning at the innermost, this consisted of small upright stones; the second, or next, of five trilithons, or five pairs of uprights with an impost, or cross stone, on the top of each pair, fastened by tenon and mortice; the third, composed of small upright stones; and the fourth, or outside circle, of large stones, twenty feet high, and seven feet wide. 3rd. The distance between the outer *oval* circle of the five trilithons, and that of the inner, was about three feet. 4th. There is an eastern entrance into the area, about two hundred and twenty feet from the building, where three large stones are placed; and in the middle of this area, or just in the half way from the entrance stones to the temple, there is a hollow place, with a stone lying flat in the earth, perhaps the place of sacrifice before entering the sacred inclosure, like the altar of burnt-offering for sacrifice before the tabernacle of the congregation in the worship of Israel.

Before we dismiss our account of the building, we would remark on some things worthy of notice,

most of which are selected from the authors of the "Universal History."* 1. The stones are placed in a kind of socket, dug in the chalky soil, having small stones carefully rammed in between the stone and the sides of the socket. 2. That in the trilithons the uprights are locked or fastened together by tenon and mortice even to this day, and that they exactly fit each other; of which trilithons there were originally fifteen. 3. That though there are greater and smaller stones, yet that the stones of the trilithons are twenty-one feet high, seven feet and a half in breadth, and three feet nine inches thick. 4. The stones of the second circle, and the stones of the second oval, are pyramidal. 5. Each tenon is a Druidical cubit, somewhat above twenty inches in diameter on th broadest side, for they are of an oval figure; and the mortices are exactly answerable to the tenon. 6. "Where the imposts are heaviest, the tenons are shortest; and where those are lightest, and consequently more in danger to be shaken, as in those of the outward circle, these are made longest, and the mortices deeper accordingly." 7. "If the bottom face of the impost be divided into three squares, the two mortices will be found in the middle of the two outward ones: draw diagonal lines from corner to corner, and where they intersect is the centre of the mortice; which central distance from one to the other is seven Druidish cubits, or about eight of ours." 8. "The

* Universal History, vol. vii. pp. 341—345.

ellipsis, or oval, is formed by a line of sixty cubits, which, being joined at the two ends, and turned round the two centres, give a diameter of thirty cubits at the longest, and twenty-five at the shortest, five cubits being the supposed distance between the two centres." To which we add, 9. A remark of Brown, that, in the trilithons of the large or first oval, "the uprights of the first pair stand sixteen feet above the surface of the ground; those of the second, seventeen; and those of the central one, twenty-two." And the inner oval rises in height, too, according to Dr. S. And, 10. A remark of King's, "That the stones of the inner *circle* are of darker hue than those of the outer circle, almost inclining to black:" and Dr. S. says, that the stones of the lesser oval are "of a much harder sort than the other stones of the lesser circle." 11. The stone called the "altar-stone" (though, as we conceive, erroneously,) is noticed by the observers in general as distinguishable from the rest, and is a different kind of stone.

But this last-mentioned stone deserves a more attentive consideration. Inigo Jones's account of it is this:—"In the inmost part of the work there is a stone, appearing not much above the surface of the earth, and lying toward the east, four feet broad and sixteen feet long, which, whether it might be an altar or no, I leave to the judgment of others; because so overwhelmed with the ruins of this work, that I could make no search after it, but even with much difficulty took the

aforesaid dimensions thereof; yet, for my part, I can apprehend no valid reasons to the contrary, except that the whole constructure being circular in form, the altar shewed rather to have been placed upon the centre of the circle than inclined to the circumference." And Stukeley says, that it is " at present flat on the ground, and squeezed (as it were) into it by the weight of the ruins upon it. It is a kind of blue, coarse marble, such as comes from Derbyshire." King thinks it " has marks of burning upon it still remaining;" while Dr. Smith says, that " this altar will not bear the fire." And he adds, " I tried a fragment of it in a crucible: it soon changed its bluish to an ash colour, and, in a stronger fire, was reduced to powder." Irrespective of this consideration, however, we conceive that it is not an altar-stone; for, first, if it was an altar, even of incense (for an altar of burnt-offering, if we may take the Jewish ritual for our guide, would be without the building), we might expect to see it in the centre, or near the centre, but this is at the upper end of the ellipsis. Secondly, Its *form* is not that of an altar, its dimensions being sixteen feet long, four broad, and twenty inches thick—if laid on the ground, therefore, it would be too low; if raised, it would be too high, and not spacious enough. Wherefore, we conceive it to be either a pillar, on which some object of adoration was placed—an image of the sun, or sacred fire, as an emblem of it, for instance,—or even an object of adoration itself. In favour of the for-

mer opinion, its situation before thrown down (so thrown down, probably, on renouncing idolatry), would be just in the right place, leaving room for the Arch-Druid to burn incense before it; or, if the latter, the same: to which may be added, 1. That, as we have proved before, stones were really objects of adoration in Britain; 2. That the stone is different from all the rest. Thus Stukeley represents it as a kind of blue marble; King calls it a long black stone; and Moore, in his "History of Ireland," says, "that it has been lately discovered, on examination, to be black." 3. Other stones that have been objects of adoration have been found to be black. Thus Maurice, in his "Indian Antiquities," observes, "that the idol in the celebrated temple of Juggernaut is black."* Gibbon says, "that the Phœnicians of Emesa offered up their vows to a stone that was black, invoking it as a symbol of the sun, by the mystic name Elagabalus."† And Moore speaks of a curious cavern near Drogheda, in Ireland, where there is a pyramidal obelisk, thought to have been consecrated to the sun. Unless we conceive of it thus, as designed to exhibit an idol on its top, or as being the idol itself, how shall we account for the presence of a stone so different in form, in size, and in quality from all the rest?

Thus from the statements above made of this extraordinary structure, and the remarks concern-

* Conjecture concerning Stonehenge, p. 69.

† Gibbon, vol. i. p. 6.

ing it, some judgment, it is presumed, may be formed of what kind of monument it is, or rather has been, that we have under consideration. Our minds are now, therefore, prepared for a general definition of its *origin, design,* and *use.* We conceive, then,

That Stonehenge was a place of general assembly of the states and inhabitants of Britain, for the celebration of their public religious festivals, for the inauguration of their kings, and for general councils; that it was built by the direction of the Druidical priesthood as originally Phœnician, under the patronage of the British states; and that the stones were conveyed and the building was constructed by the use of rollers, &c. Moreover, that, besides the area, or court, and the trench, the barrows are connected with it; and that these latter are burying-places of the honoured dead.

Whether this general view of the subject be founded in probability, perhaps, will best appear by an attention to its several particulars, and that in their order.

First. We conceive it was a place of general assembly of the states and inhabitants of Britain, for the celebration of their public religious festivals.

From time immemorial it has been the custom of nations to hold religious festivals at stated seasons. So it was with the ancient nation of Israel. Thrice a year all their males, princes and

priests, elders and people, assembled at the place of sacrifice, and offered their solemn sacrifices, viz. at the feast of unleavened bread, at the feast of weeks, and at the feast of tabernacles; and very much akin to this was the custom of the British Isles to assemble together in the calends of May, at Midsummer in June, and in the beginning of November. As did Israel, so did the Britons combine with these feasts the offering of sacrifices; and hence we call them religious festivals. There they sacrificed to their gods, sung their praises, and made their orations or prayers, as was the custom among the nations of Greece and Rome, and others.

Perhaps we shall not err, if we say, that at Stonehenge there were, on certain occasions, meetings of the inhabitants of the British Isles for the worship of the sun and heavenly bodies.

Various hypotheses have been advanced by the different writers on this subject, from Jeffery of Monmouth down to Sir R. C. Hoare, and very lately a Mr. Brown; but, were we to discuss them all, with the reasons by which they have been supported, or might be opposed, the spirit of inquiry would be completely exhausted; we shall content ourselves, therefore, with observing, that we concur with Dr. Stukeley in considering it as a Druidical temple, and of course a place of general assembly for religious purposes. That it was a Druidical fabric, the authors of the "Universal History" admit; but they differ from Dr. S., by supposing

it to be a sepulchral monument. Their hypothesis, however, appears to be founded upon oversight, for the reason of their dissent from Dr. S. is, that "the patriarchs are no where recorded to have reared anything but bare altars:" and hence they conclude that such a building as this, consisting of circles of stones, could not have its origin from Phœnicia; whereas, though the patriarchs are not recorded to have raised any thing but altars or pillars, yet their immediate descendants, the Israelites, did; for in the time of Moses and Joshua, they reared circles of stones; one at the foot of Mount Sinai, and another in Gilgal, each of which places is near the Phœnician territory. And then, in supposing that the sepulchral remains found in the barrows supply a reason for concluding that the structure itself is a sepulchral monument, they overlook the idea that a superstitious veneration for the sacred building, inducing the wish of being interred within sight of it, might sufficiently account for the circumstance. Thus the Jews think it a privilege to be buried near Jerusalem, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat; thus, too, the Christian world in general wish to be interred in or near their places of public worship.

We shall now assign the reasons for supposing it to be a place of general assembly, and that for public worship. The name given it by the ancient Britons, "Choir Ghaur," is here worthy of notice. The words, according to Dr. Stukeley, signify "Great Church," which may not be far from the

truth, since the word "Church" itself signifies an assembly; but a respectable writer on Stonehenge, though anonymous, after commenting particularly and learnedly on the words, states their meaning to be "the circular high place of the assembly." And no one that has seen this venerable monument of antiquity, and the situation in which it stands, being upon a most extensive and elevated plain, can feel any difficulty in supposing that it might be a place of general assembly. But that it was really so, appears from a remarkable fact that took place on the spot some time before the Saxons made themselves masters of Britain. Hengist, the Saxon king, sent a deceitful message to Vortigern, the king of Britain, proposing a conference with him. The latter, accepting the proposal, fixed on the calends of May, then approaching, a time of general assembly at the abbey of Aubrius, for the conference. Hengist, having formed the treacherous design of assassinating all the noblemen who should be then assembled, ordered a body of chosen men to come to the assembly with daggers; and while the Britons were busy in the conference, on a given signal, to assassinate them. They did so; for they fell upon the unarmed Britons, and treacherously slew four hundred and forty of the nobility.* Such is Owen's account of the number

* Owen's Ancient Brit. vol. i. p. 143. Might it not be supposed that this fact originated the name "Stonehenge?" "Stone," because composed of stones; "henge," because a place distinguished for the treachery of *Hengist*?

in his "History of the Ancient Britons;" but Verstegan states it at three hundred. This place is that which is now called "Stonehenge;" and an event of this kind might very well take place on occasion of such a general assembly, when thus occupied and unarmed. Indeed, the situation and the structure plainly indicate that its erection must be for some general purpose of this or a similar kind.

That it was a place of assembly for the inhabitants of the British Isles, is equally probable. Vortigern and his nobles were Britons, and they were assembled on the occasion just mentioned for a national purpose. The mounds of separation, as well as the extent of the area from the outer stones to the Temple itself, plainly indicate that there must have been large assemblages of people, of the Druidical order, and of the common people. And, since the people of Gaul came over, as Cæsar tells us, to be instructed of the British Druids, it is not improbable that on occasion of the great annual festivals many might come even from thence. The Hindoos make pilgrimages of a thousand miles to be present at the festival of Juggernaut.

And why should not Stonehenge be a place of general assembly for public idolatrous worship? The place itself is admirably suited to it. The vast plain is a place on which it is almost impossible to tread without feeling some sort of awe of Him

who made the heaven above and the earth around; and if they worshipped the sun, as we shall presently see they did, where would they find a more eligible spot? But the circles of stones form an argument in favour of the supposition; for there is satisfactory evidence that circles of stones were commonly placed for the purposes of worship in all the British Isles. Many of them remain in England even until now; and, as observed before, in the Highlands of Scotland they not only remain, but are called "Clachan," which, in Gaelic, actually signifies a place of worship; and to this day they use the phrase, "Are you going to," or "Are you come from the stones?" When they mean, "Are you going to," or "Are you coming from the church?" Neither can any purpose be assigned so satisfactory for those numerous circular stone monuments of antiquity that are to be found in England and Wales, and Scotland and Ireland:* while, if you consider the practice of erecting them for such purposes as originally introduced from those Phœnician territories that border on the Land of Israel, according to our last chapter, it is very easy to account for such structures, and as

* There are places in Ireland on which open temples, consisting of a circle of tall, straight, stone pillars, with a very large flat stone, called Cromlech, serving for an altar, was erected. A place of this sort is called "Magh-Adhair," a "place or field of adoration or worship." Several places of this name were known in Ireland, particularly in the country now called "the county of Clare." Here, too, the kings of the O'Brien race were inaugurated. O'Brien's Irish Dict. in Moore, p. 46.

erected for such a purpose. In the land called sometimes Phœnicia, sometimes Palestine, sometimes Syria and Canaan, the patriarch Jacob first took a pillar of stone, and anointed it for a place of worship—a "Bethel," a "house of God." Some time after Moses placed twelve pillars of stone, answerable to the twelve tribes of Israel, together, with an altar, where he and the whole congregation of Israel worshipped, ratifying the covenant between God and them: about forty years after that, twelve stones were taken out of the bed of the river Jordan, as a memorial of Israel's passing over Jordan, and were placed at Gilgal, on the eastern side of Jordan; to which we add, that this spot became afterwards, not only a place of general assembly, but of sacrifice; first, as an offering to the true God, and at length to idol gods. Now, all these facts combined, prove that these stony structures were used as places of worship there; and if the people who used them there came here and introduced their religion, of course they would erect these same sort of circular temples. And, Stonehenge being the most considerable, and the place of general or national assembly, we may reasonably suppose that extraordinary pains would be taken with that structure. And to this, perhaps, may be attributed the circumstance, that whereas in some of the less general places of worship there are three or four circles of stones, occupying separate spaces of ground, here, at Stonehenge, there are four

circles, forming one building, as though the assembly being one, the temple should be one. We may conclude, therefore, that Stonehenge, as well as Abury, and the other circular collections of stones, were designed for worship, especially if we add what Mr. Webb, one of those who has written upon Stonehenge, says, that the heads of oxen and deer, and other beasts, have been found in digging in and about it; and also that Mr. Thomas Hayward, some time since owner of Stonehenge, dug about it and found the heads of oxen, and the bones of other beasts, used for the worship of the sun, and perhaps other heavenly bodies. Diodorus Siculus, who lived about sixty years before Christ, in his fifth book quotes a passage from Hecatæus and some others, as saying, "that there is an island in the ocean, over-against Gaul" (now France), "where the Hyperboreans* inhabit. Solina was born there; and therefore they worship Apollo (the sun), above all other gods, daily singing praises to his honour; and hence the inhabitants so demean themselves as if they were Apollo's priests. They have a stately grove, and a renowned temple, of a circular form, beautified with many rich gifts. They have also a city consecrated to this god, whose citizens are most of them harpers, who chaunt the sacred hymns to

* A name given by the ancients, as Dyche observes, to some seas, mountains, and people, the true situation whereof they did not know, but, however, agreed they were very far north, or at the world's end.

Apollo 'in the temple.'" "There are likewise among them philosophers and divines, whom they call Saronides, who are held in great veneration and esteem, through whom they present their thank-offerings to the deity: these Druids, or bards, are obeyed both in peace and war." Such is this remarkable passage in Diodorus, as declared to be taken from not only Hecatæus, but from "others;" though it is true, Diodorus treats it as "much like a fable;" but, if we cast our mind's eye for a moment on Stonehenge, and consider it as "the temple" intended, and on "Sarum," the city not far from it; and these as situated in "an island in the ocean, over-against Gaul" (France), we perhaps shall be inclined to think it not altogether as a fable, but as a fact, which this Hecatæus and others had collected. And, if so, here is not only testimony to the antiquity of the monument (and really there can be no difficulty in believing it to be so ancient),—not only testimony to its being a place of worship as a temple,—but that there is testimony also to the sun being the object of worship, the point we are just now insisting on. But we need not confine ourselves to this testimony. Not only does it appear that the sun was an object of worship with the Phœnicians, by whom, as we have seen, these Isles were partly peopled, and by whom the Phœnician religion was introduced among them, but that it was so with the British Isles. Bel, otherwise Phœbus or Apollo, was the supreme god with the

Druids. That the Irish worshipped the sun appears from Patrick's Confession, at the time he contributed to introduce Christianity: "Nam Sol iste quem videmus, Deo jubente, propter nos quotidiè oritur, sed nunquam regnabit, neque permanabit splendor ejus, sed et omnes qui adorant eum in pœnam miseri malè devenient. Nos autem credimus et adoramus Solem verum Christum;" that is, "For that sun which we see arises daily at God's command, for our sake; but he will never reign, nor will his brightness continue for ever, but all they also who adore him shall as wretched, miserably go down to punishment," or shall be miserably punished. "But we believe in and adore the true Sun, even Christ." Thus he contrasts the Sun, whom they adored as reigning, with Christ, the true Sun, who truly reigns. And to this day, there are places called, "Knoc Greine," and "Tuam Greine," hills of the sun, high places, and cairns, where ages since sacred rites were solemnised, besides other names of places which strongly mark this sort of worship.* It appears, too, that on the eve of May-day, which was the time of one of their great annual festivals, they were accustomed to light fires on the tops of their cairns or stone-heaps, and the people leaped through them in honour of Bel; other existing circumstances also confirm it. The annual rent which the farmers, in some parts of Ireland, pay to their landlords in the month of May, is called

* Moore's Ireland, in Lardner's Cab. Ency. p. 21.

by them "Cios-na-Bealtinne," or "the rent of Baal's fire;" and to this day, too, "the custom of making bonfires on the first night of May prevails throughout Ireland."* The aborigiral Irish still call the eve of the first of May "La Bealteine," or "the day of Belen's fire." And the word "Beltein," which is a name given to a fair held in Peebles, in Scotland, at the beginning of May, is said to signify the feast of the Sun, which was once observed at that season of the year.† To add no more, the same name is still attached to the eve of May-day in the Highlands of Scotland; and proverbs yet exist which refer to the custom of running between two fires in honour of Bel, such as "I was between Bel's two fires," meaning, "I was in a dilemma or perplexity."‡ Thus, then, it appears that the sun was the object of worship in these British Isles; and, farther, it may be reasonably inferred that the building under consideration was erected for such worship: and the evidence, perhaps, will appear still more conclusive, if we take into account the circumstance that the conference spoken of before between Hengist and Vortigern was on the calends of May, being the time of general assembly and of sacrifice.§

* Moore's Ireland, pp. 22 and 23.

† Lawson's Discourses, p. 277.

‡ Toland.

§ Bray, in his "Part of Devonshire," &c. says, that in the curious and ancient poem, Gododin, "the sacred fire near the Cursus of Stonehenge is called 'the perpetual fire;'" and remarks,

In our general definition of this monument, we stated it as our opinion, that it might be erected for other "public purposes" besides that of worship. We allude to those of the inauguration of the British kings, and of the general councils of the nations or states. And both Dr. Henry, in his "History of England," and Moore, in his "History of Ireland," have thrown out a hint of this kind, although they have not enlarged upon the subject. From the latter, however, as to the inauguration of kings at similar monuments, he gives us, in a note, some appropriate information; for he tells us from Olaus Magnus, that the monarchs of Sweden were thus inaugurated, sitting upon "a stone placed in the centre of twelve lesser ones;" and that "in a similar kind of circle the kings of Denmark were crowned."* And whether it were in the midst of a circle of stones or not, yet it appears that the Irish kings, from very ancient times until A.D. 513, were crowned upon a particular, sacred stone, called "Liath Fail," "the stone of destiny;" that so also were the Scottish kings until the year 1296, when Edward I. of England brought it here; and it is a curious fact, that this stone has not only remained in England until now, and is existing still under the coronation chair of our British sovereigns in Westminster Abbey, but that

in a note, that "Stonehenge was a temple of the Sun, and fire was invariably used in the worship of its deity."—Vol. i. p. 147.

* Moore, vol. i. 42.

all our kings, from James I., have been crowned in that chair. This being a fact so curious, we shall quote its particulars in a note, as taken from Toland, in his "History of the Druids,"* and from Mr. Edward O'Reilly, author of the "Irish Dictionary," in his letter to Sir W. Betham, and inserted in his "Irish Antiquarian Researches."†

* Toland, p. 137—139.

† Toland's statement is this: "The fatal stone (Liag fail), so called, was the stone on which the supreme kings of England used to be inaugurated, in times of heathenism, on the hill of Tarah: it was superstitiously sent to confirm the Irish colony in the north of Great Britain, where it continued as the coronation seat of the Scottish kings, ever since Christianity; till, in the year one thousand three hundred, Edward I. of England brought it from Scone, placing it under the coronation chair at Westminster; and there it still continues. I had almost forgot to tell you, that it is now by the vulgar called Jacob-stone, as if this had been Jacob's pillow at Bethel." So far Toland. Now we extract O'Reilly's account: speaking of the "Leath Fail," he says, "All our Irish historical writers, ancient and modern, tell us that it was a large stone, of extraordinary virtue, brought into Ireland; that the monarchs of Ireland, from A.M. 2764 to A.D. 513, were all inaugurated on the Lia Fail, which, until that period, was kept at Tara in Meath, the chief seat of the Irish monarchs. At this last-mentioned period, Muisceortagh (Murkertagh) reigned. Fergus, his brother, having established for himself a kingdom in Alba, or as it has been since called Scotland, procured from his brother the Lia Fail, that on it he might, with the greater solemnity, be inaugurated king over his new possession. The stone was never returned to Ireland, but remained in Scotland, and each succeeding king of Scotland was crowned thereon until Edward I. of England invaded that country, A.D. 1296, and carried off into his own country the Scottish regalia, among which was the Lia Fail. From that period to the present day, it has remained in England; and ever since the reign of James I. has continued to serve the purpose for which it was so long used

We proceed to observe, that from these things it would appear, that circles of stones, with an eminent stone in the midst, were places used for the inauguration of kings; and, if so, how natural to suppose that such a building as Stonehenge should be so applied. Nor, perhaps, will it be deemed irrelevant to the subject, after what we have said about Israelitish and Phœnician intercourse, and afterwards concerning Phœnician and British intercourse, to state our conjecture, that the custom just mentioned originated in Palestine, and took its rise from facts recorded in Scripture: for, so early as the time of the Judges of Israel, we find it recorded that all the men of Shechem gathered together, and made "Abimelech king in the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem:" for look at 1 Sam. xi. 14, 15, and you will see that, by the direction of Samuel, "the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal: and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace offering before the Lord: and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly." And, let it not be forgotten, that at Gilgal it was that the twelve stones that had been taken out of Jordan, had been set up.*

in Ireland and Scotland; the kings of England from his time down to the present sovereign having been crowned on it."

* Borlase, in his "Cornwall," remarks, "that the ancients took care that all civil treaties, laws, and elections, should be attended by sacrifices." And, if so, this last idea will very well accord with the former.—Borlase, p. 203.

We mentioned also that Stonehenge might be designed as a place of *General Council.* In confirmation of this idea, we may refer to the conference between Vortigern, the British king, and Hengist, the Saxon king, held there, which ended in such a treacherous massacre of the British chieftains, as mentioned before. And if we take into consideration that the religion of the Gauls and Britons was the same—both Druidical—the idea will receive an accession of strength from a reference to the custom of the Druids in Gaul, now France, to meet together in general assembly and council in Chartres.* Not only had they at this place a college, to which scholars went from all quarters, but it was the sovereign seat of their dominion. There, too, "the general assemblies were held, and there the public sacrifices were offered:" and, "at the great days, which were held regularly and annually there, at the time of the great sacrifices, they examined and determined all affairs of great importance. They took cognizance of all the misdemeanors and crimes which had escaped the inferior courts of justice, and had remained unpunished." Such is the account of Sabbathier of

* Cæsar says, it was thought that Druidism originated in Britain: "Disciplina in Britannia reperta atque inde in Galliam translata esse, existimatur."—De Bell. Gall. lib. vi. c. 13.

"The ancients took care that all civil treaties, laws, and elections, should be attended by sacrifices."—Borlase, p. 203.—Now Stonehenge was a place for sacrificing.

this meeting at Chartres; and reflecting on the conference before noticed, held at Stonehenge, proposed, too, as it was by Vortigern in a natural way, as though a thing of course to hold councils there, the inference is obvious, that the design of the public meeting at Chartres and Stonehenge was similar.*

Thus, then, we have seen that Stonehenge was a place of general assembly for worship, for the inauguration of kings, and for general or national councils; but before we discuss this branch of our subject, it may be proper to notice the number of circles of stone that formed, and in some degree still forms, this ancient structure. So far as hitherto appears, it does not seem necessary that more than one circle of stones, with its eminent stone in the centre, would be requisite; but here at Stonehenge, there were four, or rather two circles and two ovals. Why so? To elucidate this topic of inquiry it may be necessary to advert to the several orders of Druids and their offices. There was, then, the Arch-Druid, who like a sovereign pontiff, ruled over kings as well as the body of Druids; or, at least, like the Jewish high

* "The Gauls (of course the Britons) had one constant law, to call every year, at a certain time, a general council of the whole nation; in which whatever related to the common interest of the whole nation was debated and settled."—Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 366. And again, say the same authors, "the Druids of Gaul had a general assembly in the midst of the country, to which resorted persons from all quarters who had any controversies to decide."—P. 406.

priest, who was head over the inferior priests and the People; there were the Druidical priests, whose business it was to offer sacrifices and burn incense, like the priests of Israel; and there were the Bards, who sang the sacred songs, and played their sacred music, like the Levites amongst the Jews; and there were the Vates or Eubages, who inspected the entrails of animals for divination or augury, like the Levites that attended upon the priests to flay the sacrifices. May we not then fairly suppose that these different orders, on their solemn and general assemblies, would occupy the different circles, and the Arch-Druid and the inferior priests the sacred ovals of the adytum, and the Bards and Vates the less sacred outer circles, or more particularly the Arch-Druid the interior oval, where the sacred stone was; the Priests the exterior oval; then the Bards the circle adjoining; and the Vates the outer circle? And then the large area around might be occupied by the congregation of the initiated, as was the court of the tabernacle by the people or congregation of Israel; and all others might stand without the sacred inclosure.

And if we view Stonehenge as a place of general assembly for worship, that remarkable stone now laid flat in the adytum, or interior oval (so laid flat probably when heathenism was overthrown), might be considered as the stone on which the sun-image was placed "on high, above," to use

Scripture phrase, for the purpose of adoration,* by the Arch-Druid, as the representative of the people, while the priests might be considered as worshiping in the next oval, and the Bards and Vates doing the same in their respective circles, while the multitude might be worshiping without, as in the Jewish temple.† Nor will even their worshiping the stone itself appear improbable, if the hypothesis before insisted on be admitted, that the religious worship of the ancient Britons was of Phœnician origin. For we find, that they not only worshiped stones, but, according to Gibbon,‡ the Phœnicians of Emasa offered up their vows to a stone, invoking it, as a symbol of the sun, by the mysterious name Elagabalus. And it seems that this stone, so called, was black. In accordance with which it is remarkable that the stone in the adytum at Stonehenge, considered also as a temple consecrated to the sun, has been, as Moore remarks, "lately discovered, on examination, to be black."§ Thus showing the similarity between the Druidical order of worship and that of the Israelites; which will not appear unreasonable, if we consider the contiguity to, and the intercourse between, Phœnicia and Israel.

* See 2 Chr. xxxiv. 4; and the margin, "Sun-Image."

† "On the pedestal of the famous obelisk erected by Theodosius the emperor in the Hippodrome at Constantinople, the people are justly represented in bas-relief, prostrate, and adoring."—Spon, vol. i. p. 193, in Borlase, p. 162.

‡ Vol. i. c. vi. § Moore, p. 21.

If we view Stonehenge as a building erected for the inauguration of kings, and this interior stone to be the stone of regal consecration, we may then conceive of the Arch-Druid as performing the rite of consecration in the interior, and the remaining orders occupying their respective situations as before. And the same, in the case of general councils. And thus we account for the number of circles, and conceive that, while the single circles might serve for particular districts, this, as a superior structure, might be designed for national and general purposes.

That Stonehenge was built under the direction of the Druidical priesthood, is also probable. All accounts, ancient and modern, agree that the Druidical priests were the "wise men" among the Britons; they therefore, or the nobility instructed by them, seem to be the only persons capable of planning such a structure; a structure considered as displaying great scientific accuracy.* But that this Druidical priesthood were of Phœnician origin, will not, perhaps, be so readily granted. It may, however, be fairly supposed, for two reasons; first, because their religion was Phœnician; and secondly, because, while we have no other account of their origin, it is easy to conceive of their removal from Phœnicia, on the

* So thought Dr. Stukeley. The Druids employed many thousands of men—a whole country, to labour at their public structures, dedicated to the Deity.

coasts of Tyre and Sidon, to this country by sea. The identity of the religion of the Phœnicians and Druids has been shewn already, and so has been the facility with which the former might emigrate and settle here. And to the remarks made in the dissertation on these subjects before attempted, we may here add, that there are words still retained in connexion with this building that are said to be of Phœnician extract. Thus "Choir Gaur," the ancient denomination, is in the Phœnician tongue; and, as before observed, signifies "the circular high place of the assembly." The term "Bar-row," is of "Phœnician growth," signifying "the thrown up pit of consumption or lamentation." The instrument with which the mistletoe was cut on their great annual festival, called "celt" or "kelt," was "so named from the Hebrew or Phœnician KALAT, recepit, retinuit, collegit, being that with which this divine medicine was gathered."* On these accounts, we may, it is presumed, infer, with no small degree of probability, not only that the erection of Stonehenge was under the direction of the Druidical priesthood, but that that priesthood in its origin was Phœnician.

A stupendous structure, such as this is, could not be raised by private individuals; but, as it was for public use, may be naturally considered as the result of public expense and public labour.

* Description of Stonehenge, Abury, &c. by Anon. pp. 24 and 28.

Moreover, being constructed for religious and national purposes, it may well be supposed to engage the public mind. So thought Dr. Henry. His words, in his "History of Great Britain," are these: "If this was the real work of the ancient Britons, it was probably planned by the Druids, and executed under their direction at the common expense, and by the united power of all the British states, to be the chief temple of their gods, and perhaps the sepulchre of their kings, and the place of their general assemblies. For it is well known that where a people are cordially united under the direction of skilful leaders, and animated by two such powerful motives as an ardent zeal for their religion and for the glory of their country, they will perform achievements and execute works which could hardly be expected from them." Nothing more, we conclude, need be said to support the opinion, that it was built under public patronage, and that the patronage of the British states.

An interesting part of our definition of Stonehenge yet remains; and that is, that the stones were conveyed, and that the building was constructed, by the use of rollers, &c. It has always been a matter of astonishment that stones of such a prodigious size and immense weight should be raised, as the uprights are raised, one upon another, as the imposts or cross-stones are; and still more that they should be conveyed to the place, espe-

cially as there appears to be no quarries within many miles from whence they might be procured. "The difficulty," say the authors of "The Universal History," "is to conceive how stones of that immense weight, one of which, though neither the largest nor the heaviest, has been computed, by proper judges, to weigh between thirty and forty tons,* and consequently would have required about an hundred and fifty oxen to have drawn it, could have been conveyed from their original seat to Stonehenge, which is sixteen computed miles, and along such uneven ground, and in such quantities as compose the fabric. Sure it is, that no carriage can be conceived which would not have been sunk into the ground by such a monstrous weight, unless it be that of rollers; but even this must appear a more than Herculean labour; the arduousness of which cannot be extenuated, but by the supposition that the whole, or at least the greatest part of the nation, contributed their help towards it in their turns."† This seems to be a fair statement of the difficulty; to endeavour to surmount it is our business: though, whether we succeed or not, this is certain—that the stones are there, and that they could not have been so placed without hands.

* Dr. Maton, in a Letter on the fall of three stones, dated May 30, 1797, computes the weight of the whole to be seventy tons.

† Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 344.

Some relief we feel from thinking of the ancient Egyptian temples—the pyramids; of the temples of Egypt, the colossus of Rhodes, obelisks, and so on, which we know, from ancient as well as modern accounts, were formed of stones of most stupendous size, and must have been transported, raised, and placed by astonishing mechanical skill and force.* It is of some relief to us also to turn

* Wilkinson, in his Manners and Customs of the Egyptians, speaking of a magnificent propylæum, in Egypt, requiring some repairs, says, that "Amasis collected for this purpose a quantity of stones of amazing thickness, part of which were brought from the quarries of Memphis, and part from the cataracts of Syene." And then he quotes Herodotus concerning an edifice near the temple—"But what, in my opinion," says Herodotus, "deserves the greatest admiration, is an edifice of a single stone, brought from the city of Elephantine, a distance of about twenty days' journey. Two thousand men, chosen from the class of boatmen, were employed for the space of three years in transporting it to Sais. Its external length is twenty-one cubits, its breadth is fourteen, and height eight; and in the inside it measures eighteen cubits and twenty digits in length, twelve in breadth, and five in height. It stands near the entrance of the temple." He adds, "some affirm, that one of the men, while moving it with a lever, was crushed to death, and that on this account they were ordered to desist" taking it any farther. Vol. i. p. 190.

The same author says, that Cheops, one of the kings of Egypt, and who is said, both by Herodotus and Diodorus to have built the great pyramid, "having it in view, compelled some to hew stones in the quarries of the Arabian mountains, and to drag them to the banks of the Nile; others were appointed to receive them from the boats and transport them to the mountains of Lybia: and for this service 100,000 men were employed, who were relieved every three months. In the operation of forming the road, by which the stones were carried, ten years were consumed; and

our thoughts to the temple of Solomon—to his own house, to his house of the forest of Lebanon —the former of which, even the second temple, we know, from Josephus, was made of stones immensely large; and as to the latter, the sacred historian tells us, that "the foundation was of costly stones; even great stones; stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits." And if we take into account that Huram, a Phœnician, and his servants, who were Phœnicians, assisted in building Solomon's temple, and that, according to our hypothesis, this temple of Stonehenge was built under the direction of a Druidical priesthood, whose race was Phœnician, we may perhaps be still further relieved. But yet the question returns, where was the strength, and where the skill, to procure, to convey, and to place these stones? In reply, we may say, 1. That its builders, being of Phœnician origin, may be considered to be men of gigantic strength. 2. That they might be men of great skill. 3. That it might be by the use of the wedge, of levers, of rollers, and of mounts raised in the form of an inclined plane. Then, 1. The men being of Phœnician origin, might be men

this arduous undertaking appears scarcely inferior to the pyramid itself, which, independent of the time employed in preparing the hill where it stands, occupied twenty years." Vol. i. pp. 126, 127.

Let the reader consult Pliny's Natural History, book xxxvi. ch. ix. and some following chapters, and he will see how truly astonishing were the efforts of the ancients, as well as their mechanical skill in these things.

of gigantic strength, and even of stature. The Phœnician territory bordered on the land of Israel; now we know that that land was formerly inhabited, part of it at least, by men of such gigantic stature, that the Israelites said that they were but as grasshoppers before them in their own sight. Such, it seems, were the Anakims. We are told, also, that the Emims and the Zamzummims were giants; and we read of the amazing stature of Og, king of Bashan, &c.* Now, at this very time, as has been before observed, a great number of Phœnicians would leave that country, being expelled by Joshua, and many of them would probably be men of this kind. And, afterwards, when other bodies of them should quit these shores, at the subsequent sieges of Tyre, by Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander, and sail into these parts, perhaps their stature and strength would not have been much diminished; so that we may suppose that Stonehenge, being the work of such Phœnicians, might be the work of men far more gigantic in size and strength than our present race.† 2. That they might be men of great *me-*

* Deut. ii. 10, 11, and 20, 21; Numb. xiii. 33. See Amos, ii. 9. "The Amorite, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and was strong as the oaks," i. e. in comparison.

† From Calmet, under the word "giant." In the year 1719, at Stonehenge, near Salisbury, in England, a human skeleton was found, which was nine feet four inches long. (French Gazette, of Oct. 6, 1719, under the date of Sept. 21.) And in Bray's Part of Devonshire bordering on the Tamar and the Tavy, a farmer

chanical skill; and, according to the representations that have been given by some who have written concerning the fabric, astronomical and mathematical skill were requisite in order to the erection of this monument of antiquity. And skill in these branches of science was not wanting in the Phœnicians, at least in Solomon's time, which was a thousand years before Christ, or in Ezekiel's time, five hundred years after Solomon. Hiram, king of Tyre, assisted Solomon greatly in the building of the temple, and in providing for it the appointed utensils; and, amongst other things, what shall we think of his casting two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits a piece, and a line of twelve cubits was necessary to compass them about? In Ezekiel's time, too, the Phœnicians were eminent for wisdom and knowledge, as we have shewn before. Hence we may suppose they would not be wanting either in mechanical or astronomical or mathematical skill. But, 3. The Scriptures inform us of a method of conveyance by *rolling,* and by *mounts,* which, combined with the wedge, the lever, and perhaps pullies and cranes, might be effectual. To procure the stones

is said to have expressed himself thus to a person conversing with him—" As the people do tell, that the giants once were masters of all the hill country, and had great forests, and set up their karns, and their great stones, and circles, and all they old ancient things about the moor." Such, it seems, was the tradition received from their fathers.

from the rock, the *wedge** perhaps might be necessary; and who can say what might be done in this way by men of gigantic strength. But are there not methods even known to us, by which stones may be made to separate from a rock in a given place? As to conveying them, when thus separated, perhaps the Scriptures, as just observed, may supply us with a little information on this head. We have mentioned *rolling*. It appears, then, that in the early ages of the world, stones were conveyed from place to place by rolling, especially great stones. Thus the great stone that was upon the well's mouth, where Jacob met with Rachel, was rolled away. When Joshua would secure the five kings of the Amorites in a cave, he said, "*Roll* great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men to keep them." When king Saul, in order to expiate the crime which the people had committed in eating with the blood, wished for an altar to be erected for sacrifice, he said, "*Roll* me a great stone." Moreover, we find, by adverting to the Chaldee original, that "the house of God, the second temple, was built by *stones of rolling*," (Ezra, v. 8.) for such is the expression, which shews that that great building, composed of such large stones, was erected

* The usual mode of cutting large blocks from the quarries was by a number of metal wedges, which were struck at the same instant along its whole length.—Wilkinson's Manners and Customs of the Egyptians, vol. iii. p. 337.

by the aid of rollers; as it does when compared with Ezra, vi. 4, that *great* stones were usually moved by rolling. And to quote no more from Scripture on this head, we find the same in later times to be the case, for, said the disciples concerning the stone laid at the sepulchre of Christ, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" We may conclude, then, that, with the Hebrews and Phœnicians, rolling was the method used for conveying great stones. But as this subject has been one of great interest with many who have taken a view of these stones, we shall enlarge a little upon it.

As to information concerning the transporting and raising of such immense masses of stone, it is difficult to procure it from profane history, even from Pliny, who has written so much concerning the ancient colossi and obelisks and pyramids, at least such as is satisfactory; but it may be remarked, that what statements we do find, if not perfectly accordant, yet will not militate against the method mentioned in Scripture. We will give what information we have collected on this subject. In Wilkinson's "Manners and Customs of the ancient Egyptians," there is a section on "Stones hewn from quarries for building;" wherein, while he acknowledges it, in speaking of their "moving weights," as "singular, that we find no illustration of the mechanical means of a people who have left so many unquestionable proofs of

skill in these matters"—he describes the manner of thus moving and transporting blocks of stone, as far as represented in their sculptures or paintings. Hence, says he, " in one of the quarries at El Maasora, the mode of transporting the stone is represented. It is placed on a sledge drawn by oxen." Then he speaks of them as drawn by men, " condemned to hard labour in the quarries as a punishment." Again, says he, " in a grotto behind E'Dayr, a Christian village between Antinoë and El Bersheh, is the representation of a Colossus, which a number of men are employed in dragging with ropes—one hundred and seventy-two men, in four rows, of forty-three each, pull the ropes attached to the sledge; and a liquid, probably grease, is poured from a vase, by a person standing on the pedestal of the statue, in order to facilitate its progress as it slides over the ground; which was probably covered with a bed of planks, though they are not indicated in the painting. Behind are four rows of men, who, though only twelve in number, may be intended to represent the set which relieved the others when fatigued. Below are persons carrying vases of the liquid, or, perhaps, water, for the use of the workmen, and some implements connected with the transport of the statue, followed by taskmasters with their wands of office. On the knee of the figure stands a man who claps his hands to the measured cadence of a song, to mark the time and

ensure their simultaneous draught. The height of the statue appears to have been about twenty-four feet, including the pedestal, and it was of limestone or sandstone, as the colour and the hieroglyphics inform us. It was bound to the sledge by double ropes, which were tightened by means of long pegs inserted between them, and twisted round until completely braced; and to prevent injury from the friction of the ropes upon the stone, a compress of leather or other substance was introduced at the part where they touched the statue." He adds, a little further on —"The obelisks transported from the quarries of Syene, at the first cataracts, in latitude 24° 5′ 23″, to Thebes and Heliopolis, vary in size from seventy to ninety-three feet in length. They are of one single stone; and the largest in Egypt, which is that of the great temple at Karnak, I calculate to weigh about 297 tons. This was brought about 138 miles from the quarry to where it now stands, and those taken to Heliopolis passed over a space of more than 800 miles. The power, however, to move the mass was the same, whatever might be the distance; and the mechanical skill which transported five, or even one, would suffice for any number of miles." Such is Wilkinson's statement,* and it is somewhat remarkable that, "in the king" of Prussia's "library at Berlin is an interesting papyrus, representing the mode of mov-

* Vol. iii. pp. 322—329.

ing colossi" very similar. The sphinx being upon a sledge, the first line of labourers are placed very close to it, and the rope is ramified, after passing under each man's arms, so that every rank in advance doubles the number in the former line, just in the way that foreign heralds exemplify quarters of descent. A drummer appears to be giving time for a simultaneous pull, a process facilitated by several attendants pouring oil where the tire of the ledge is about to pass."

So much for the conveyance of these stones, or masses of stone, by the sledge; whether they were placed on rollers does not appear: however, we think it must be admitted that rollers would facilitate such conveyance; nor is it easy to conceive how they could be conveyed without. W. Rae Wilson, Esq., in his "Travels" (Appendix*), inserts a communication that he had from Admiral Donally, "as to the mode to be adopted to remove the Needle of Cleopatra to England," and having proposed a mode of transportation by water, speaks of its being removed on rollers placed onways, by land, to a spot opposite to St. James's Park. He had done so before as to the conveyance of it on board the vessel destined to take it by water. It is manifest, then, from thence, that he considered rolling the best method. Nor would we omit the fact, that the enormous stone in the grand square of St. Petersburgh was moved

* Vol. i. p. 427.

on steel balls, a thing of a similar kind.* The transport of such stones as those under consideration, may well be conceived of as by rolling; and since that appears to have been the mode in that country from whence the Druidical religion came, it may be presumed that the stones that composed the Stonehenge temple were conveyed thither by rolling, from some quarry more or less distant.

As to raising these stones to their proper place, besides having recourse to the lever, the pulley, or the crane, the Scriptures suggest to us the mount formed by trees, as we suppose, to form an inclined plane. At least, in such a way were mounts raised for the besieging of a city or town. "Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem," says the Lord by Jeremiah.† And it is remarkable that Diodorus tells us, "that the stone was raised by mounds or inclined planes;"‡ which might answer the purpose for an elevation no greater than that of Stonehenge. And indeed Bray, in his work on Part of Devonshire bordering on the Tamar and the Tavy, observing, that in India, on the tops of some of the pagodas, there are amazing masses of rock, adds, that "to place them in such elevated situations they had recourse to *aggeration*. They took the laborious method by accumulated earth of forming an easy

* Walker's Familiar Philosophy, p. 97, and fig. 63.

† Chap. vi. 6.

‡ Diod. i. 63, in Wilkinson, vol. iii. p. 335.

ascent or inclined plane to the top, by means of levers rolled them to the summit, and then removed the mound." *

On the whole, then, we can conceive that the stones might be separated from the rock by means of a number of wedges simultaneously driven; that by the lever and other mechanical instruments they might be placed upon rollers; that a causeway might be prepared upon which the rollers might run, and that when brought near the spot intended, mounts of trees and earth might be thrown up to form an inclined plane, upon which they might be raised; and that by means of levers and cranes and pullies, they might be placed in the position appointed for them. Moreover, that whatever labour and expense and time might be required for such an operation, that, it being for religious purposes, and likewise a work of public and universal concern, such expense, labour, and time, by no means forms an insuperable difficulty, especially if we take into account the immense expense and labour, as well as time, that the ancients employed in regard to their colossi, obelisks, temples, &c.

Now, if we combine with the separating and moving powers, the use of the lever, pulley, and those other mechanical instruments or mounts just mentioned, by which great stones may be lifted up, moved forward, and raised to a given

* Bray, vol. i. p. 228.

height, we may conceive how not only the stones of Solomon's temple and other stupendous structures might be conveyed, &c. but also the stones which formed the building at Stonehenge. Nor ought the circumstance of distance to be viewed as an insuperable difficulty, if we consider that on such a public occasion, and for such a public purpose, any number of men, and men of the greatest strength, might be employed at the command of the numerous kings and chieftains concerned in the affair. However, the fact is indisputable that the stones were procured and were conveyed. If this difficulty be surmounted, the preparing and placing the stones need not perplex us. In reference to preparing them, it must be remarked, that they are rough, and perhaps designedly so, as the divine direction given to Moses was, concerning altar-stones at least, that they should not be wrought. And the placing them may be accounted for in the way already suggested. In concluding this topic—if our hypothesis be admitted, that the building called Stonehenge was reared under the direction of a priesthood that was originally Phœnician, from what is said in Scripture concerning the method in that country of rolling great stones and of casting mounts, combined with the known power of the lever and other mechanical forces, as connected with the extraordinary skill and strength that would be employed—we may account for the existence of the wonderful circular

structure in question. And, even, if in the present day our knowledge of mechanical power be inadequate to the conception of such operations, this is no valid reason for our disbelief of them, since the magnitude of some of the ancient structures of Egypt and India and Greece and Rome prove the reality of such operations. And, even though our knowledge were equal to theirs, yet, in the present state of society, engaged as our population are in trade and manufactures, we must admit that with our diminished size and physical strength, our capabilities are not equal to theirs.

We now come to the *places connected* with the building: such as the area, or court around it—the trench, or foss, or ditch (for each of these names have been given to it), that inclose the whole,—the cursus, or course, in its neighbourhood; and, lastly, the barrows that present themselves to us there in great numbers. These may not indeed be noticed by a hasty or careless view of Stonehenge, but they have been observed by those who have made it a subject of careful investigation, particularly by Dr. Stukeley. 1. The area, or court, reminding one of the Court of the Tabernacle in Israel. It is worthy of remark, that whereas sixty cubits is the diameter of the buildings, it is sixty cubits also from the buildings to "the inner edge of the circular ditch of the court," as observed by Dr. Stukeley; and the space between the edge of this circular foss or in-

closure and the temple, and the diameter of the temple itself, is the same: or we may say, in Dr. Stukeley's own words, that "the area inclosed wherein Stonehenge is situate, is in diameter three times the diameter of Stonehenge," or the building. This area or court was perhaps designed for the initiated into the Druidical religion, as the court of the tabernacle was for the congregation of Israel. 2. The trench, or circular foss, for inclosure or separation. This is a sort of ditch, and was originally thirty cubits broad; but, in consequence of the infinite number of horses and carriages that have passed it to view the building, it is now very much levelled. Just within this foss or trench, at different places, there are two stones; and Brown, a very recent writer on Stonehenge, thinks, that there were originally six stones standing, "at nearly equal distances, and serving, in conjunction with the foss itself, to mark the extent of what we may consider as sacred territory." Placed alternately with these two stones, are two semi-circular cavities or hollows, wherein Dr. Stukeley and the learned anonymous author of "the Description of Stonehenge" think, that water vases were set, for washing or purification. 3. The avenue. This is at the eastern or north-eastern side of the temple. Here are three large stones placed, at about two hundred feet from the building; and in about the middle of this line, between the entrance and the building, there is a hollow

place with a stone as if inlaid in the ground, which we conjecture might be the place originally of an altar of sacrifice, as introductory to the service of the temple; for, let it be observed, that although incense might be burned within the temple, yet the burnt-sacrifice was without, in the court of it; and if the above conjecture of Dr. Stukeley be right, that the two cavities upon the vallum were vases of water, we have both the lustration and the sacrifice preparatory to the service at the temple, as in the Jewish ritual. 4. The cursus, or course, in the neighbourhood. It was usual in the heathen world, after sacrificing and feasting upon the sacrifice, to indulge in sports and diversions.* Thus Israel, in the affair of the Golden Calf, having offered sacrifice to the idol, and ate and drank, "rose up to play:" they engaged in "singing" and "dancing." And Owen, in his "History of the ancient Britons," confirms this representation by an account that he gives us of a religious festival held at Trinobantum, in this country, to celebrate two successive victories over Cæsar. His account of it is as follows:—"This second victory filled Cassivellaur with joy; whereupon he assembled all the nobility of Britain, with their wives, to the city of Trinovantum, in order to offer solemn sacrifices to the gods, who had given them the victory over so renowned a general. Upon their arrival, great preparations

* And since the Phœnicians dedicated chariots and horses to the sun, might not these courses be run in honour of the sun?

were made, and the day to be solemnized with victims and sacrifices. Accordingly, they offered eleven thousand cows, and a hundred thousand sheep, and also fowls of several kinds innumerable, besides thirty thousand wild beasts of various kinds. After they had performed these solemn rites to their deities, they feasted themselves with the remainder as usual, and spent the remaining part of the day and the following night in several games and sports."* If this be considered as an exaggerated account—though it must be recollected that such a great assemblage of people must, as on occasion of the dedication of Solomon's temple, require a vast amount of sacrifices for food,—yet it proves, what we wish to maintain, that sports, &c. were usual on these occasions.† If so, then we may account for this cursus, or course,‡ as an adjunct to Stonehenge. The description of the place itself we shall give in the words of Dr. S. who was the first discoverer of it. In one part of his statement he says, "It is

* "A very curious and ancient Welsh poem of Gododin"—a poetical narrative or history of the conduct of Hengist and Vortigern, in the cruel slaughter of the ancient Britons, says, that this act of treachery took place in the cursus, near the great temple of Stonehenge. Bray's Part of Devonshire bordering on the Tamar and the Tavy, vol. i. p. 142.

† Moore speaks of them on such occasions. See pp. 124, 125.

‡ To surround the place or object of worship was common, and even now, "in the Isle of Barray there is one stone, about seven feet high, and when the inhabitants come near it, they take a religious turn round, according to ancient Druid custom."—Borlase, p. 163.

a space of ground, included between two long banks, going parallel east and west, at three hundred and fifty feet distance; the length ten thousand feet." And again, after remarking that "it was the universal custom to celebrate games, feasts, exercises, and sports, at their most public and solemn meetings to sacrifice," he says, "this great work is included between two ditches, running east and west, in a parallel, which are three hundred and fifty feet asunder. When I mention three hundred and fifty feet, I speak in the gross, as we should set it down in an English scale. This cursus is a little above ten thousand feet long; that is, it is made of six thousand Druid cubits in length: a most noble work, contrived to reach from the highest ground of two hills, extended the intermediate distance over a gentle valley: so that the whole cursus lies immediately under the eye of the most numerous quantity of spectators. To render this the more convenient for sight, it is projected on the side of a rising ground, chiefly looking southward towards Stonehenge."

The last thing that demands our attention, as in connexion with Stonehenge, is the *Barrows*. These are very numerous and very different, both in form and magnitude; and being contiguous to the temple, it is not improbable, as Dr. Stukeley conjectures, that such a situation was chosen out of regard to the temple; as in the case of interment in our churchyards, the place is chosen out

of regard to the church.* However, they appear to have been burying-places. Owen† intimates that the nobles who fell by the treachery of Hengist, as before mentioned, were interred here; also Aurelius, Ambrosius, Uthor, and Constantine, kings of Britain; and on opening these barrows, it has appeared to be the case. Many of them have been opened, and the depths found very different, some being very shallow, while others were nearly fifteen feet deep, and many remains of the dead have been found. Sir R. C. Hoare's account of them being compendious, we will give it. Speaking of the opening of many of them, he says, "They generally produced one or more human skeletons; but those of early æra were frequently discovered to have been interred within a cist, with the legs drawn up towards the head. Bones, loose on the floors of the barrows, burnt and unburnt, and sometimes in cists; numerous beads of amber, glass, stone, and horn; drinking cups of various sizes were very common, and appeared to have been made with very poor clay, intermixed with bits of chalk, with the exception of two or three, which were richly ornamented; rude urns, containing various kinds of burned bones; sepulchral urns, of which some were in a very perfect state; pottery; ivory pins

* The children of Israel, who did "like unto the abominations" of the Phœnicians, appear to have had their graves or "heaps" near their places of worship. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.

† Vol. i. pp. 143, 164, 174, 216.

and tweezers; brass daggers, spear heads and pins; a remarkable cist made of the trunk of an elm tree, the wood and bark appearing fresh and perfect; spear heads and arrows of flint; large pieces of stag's horn; curious whetstones; and two knives, which were both found in the same barrow." Such are the articles discovered under the barrows opened, according to Sir R. C. Hoare. And, says Dr. Stukeley, "In the great long barrow, farthest north from Stonehenge, which I call 'North Long Barrow,' and supposed to be an Arch-Druid's, was found one of those brass instruments called celts, thirteen inches long, which I hold to belong to the Druids, wherewith they cut off the mistletoe. It is now in Sir Hans Sloane's cabinet." Since, we think, transferred to the British Museum. Now tumuli, or barrows, or heaps obtained three thousand five hundred years ago, for they are to be found mentioned in the book of Job,* at least according to the Hebrew.

We have now gone through our explanation of the whole of our definition of Stonehenge. We have seen that it was a place of general assembly of the states and inhabitants of Britain, for the celebration of their public religious festivals, for the inauguration of their kings, and for general councils; that it was built by the direction of the Druidical priesthood, as originally Phœnician, under the patronage of the British states, and

* Job, xxi. 32; xxx. 24.

that it was constructed by the use of rollers, levers, &c. Moreover, that, besides the area or court, and the trench, and the cursus, the barrows are connected with it, and that these latter are burying-places of the honoured dead. If we have failed to produce conviction, criticism will not be severe, since conjecture is all that we have hitherto attained to, on a subject confessedly mysterious; and if no advance has been made, the subject, it is presumed, will not be deemed to have been uninteresting and uninstructive. That it may be still more so, it may not be amiss, perhaps, to carry back our thoughts to the period when this extraordinary structure was in its perfect state, and to let our imagination assist us in the conception of one of its public festivals. From Owen's "History of the ancient Britons," we learn, that it was here that Vortigern, the British king, and Hengist, the Saxon leader, held that conference, during which the latter treacherously procured four hundred and sixty of the nobles of Britain to be slain; and he represents it as a "day of assembly," and says that it was on "the calends of May." Now, the first of May was their annual festival in honour of Bel, Belinus, or Apollo, the Sun. Hence, we conclude that it was usual for them to hold such a general assembly at that season. Conceive, then, of this annual festival approaching. See the votaries of Apollo leaving their homes, some from religious custom, some

from the desire of relieving a guilty conscience; others from curiosity, and others from a love of pleasure: they gather from all parts of Britain, and perhaps from the coasts of Gaul. What an immense multitude are assembled on the Plain and around the temple! Distinguished amongst others, I see the Druids, properly so called, presenting themselves for the work of sacrificing—the eubates or vaids preparing the victims and examining their entrails—the bards with their harps and other instruments to play their music and to sing in honour of their gods. The scholars of the Druids, or the initiated, follow after, and perhaps the priests and the bards occupy their respective circles in the temple, leaving the adytum, or innermost place, for the Arch-Druid. On the altar, in the middle of the area, between the north-east entrance and the building, the victims with the accustomed rites are offered; while, in the mean time, the initiated, or perhaps the people, surround the altar three times, taking the course of the sun from east to west. Meanwhile the bards are playing on their harps, or singing their songs to celebrate the praises of their Apollo, the Sun. Shortly after, the Arch-Druid enters the adytum to burn incense to the idol-pillar, or the image of the Sun upon it, while the surrounding multitude without utter their orisons or prayers. These things done, they feast on the sacrifices; and having feasted, like the idolatrous Israelites

in the affair of the Golden Calf, begin singing and dancing; and, as usual, according to the expression of Owen, when speaking of another great festival of the heathen Britons, "spend the remaining part of the day and the following night in several games and sports." Of these, the chariot or horse race around the course or hippodrome, at about half a mile distance, or the licentious revels that attended the "abominable idolatries of the heathen" form a part. At meetings like these, too, the priests were consulted, and conjuring or divinations performed from the inspection of the blood and entrails of the slain victims, for the purpose of ascertaining future events. Probably also courts of judicature were held. It appears, likewise, from the instance more than once referred to, that conferences were held between different states, concerning their respective affairs.

A spectacle like the above must have been truly imposing, and in such a situation. And it was by spectacles like these, in connexion with other things which we shall presently mention, that idolatry took such fast hold of the mind. But, oh! these human sacrifices! Whether they were offered at Stonehenge we cannot say; but it is the concurrent testimony of historians that human victims were offered in these isles, as they had been amongst the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, who made their settlements here. The Druids

taught "that the life of a man can only be redeemed by that of a man; and that heaven can be propitiated by no other offering." Hence, a person in a dangerous malady, or in the perils of war, sacrificed, or made a vow to sacrifice, a human victim. These human victims were also reserved for public festivals. And, oh! that willow-idol, that Colossus, which contained many living men who were to perish in the flames! Criminals indeed were commonly chosen for victims; but sometimes, for want of criminals, the innocent were burned.* And Moore tells us, that there was a place in Ireland that bore the name of Mach-Sleacth, or the Place of Slaughter, because there an idol named Crom-cruach was worshipped by the sacrifice of the first-born of every species.†

But these human sacrifices again! Look back to Phœnicia—to Canaan—to the valley of the son of Hinnom—of shrieking, as the word imports: there see parents offering their sons and daughters to Moloch—the king of heaven, the Sun. Well might it be called the Valley of Shrieking. See

* Sabbathier, vol. i. pp. 396, 397; Univer. Hist. vol. vii. p. 334.

† Moore, p. 19. When Tacitus speaks of the descent of the Romans into this island, he tells us "that their first care was to destroy those groves and woods which the Druids had polluted with the blood of so many human victims." Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 337. And again, "Several emperors took an effectual method to suppress the Druidish power, by issuing out some severe edicts against their bloody custom of offering human sacrifices." P. 348.

the same horrid rites in Carthage, the descendants of the Phœnicians, where, in a time of public calamity, urged by distress, in order to propitiate their gods, they immolated two hundred children of the best families. And now, come to Britain, where the Phœnicians and Carthaginians traded and formed settlements, and see them, after their mourning, causing their children to pass through the fire, and burning them in honour of Bel, or Apollo, the Sun. Look at their wicker Colossus, filled with human victims; hear the shrieks of the sufferers, and the sounds of the music emitted in order to drown them! Ah, what avails the imposing spectacle—the crowding multitude, the hymns and songs of the bards, the solemn rites and ceremonies of the priests? What avails their doctrine, that the victims would be the care of the gods? the hope of the expiation of guilt, and the propitiation of their idol's favour?—the scene is horrid!* Oh! sad effects of a guilty conscience united with a "darkened heart," and the dogmas of the deluded and crafty Druidical priesthood—having long since lost the original doctrine of one great sacrifice for sin, which God himself would provide, "the Lamb of God," they substitute sacrifices of their own, to ease their consciences and to propitiate their gods! But how account for all

* See a full exhibition of this subject in a work just coming out, by the same author, entitled "The Pagan Altar and Jehovah's Temple."—(Ward and Co.)

this? How account for this Phœnician influence and the introduction of such Phœnician customs in the British Isles?

Now, as to Phœnician influence—the wisdom the Phœnicians would receive from Israel would occasion their influence over Britain.

Moses appeals to Israel, saying, "What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" And he commands them, saying, "Keep, therefore, and do them, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." Now the Phœnicians bordering on the land of Israel, and having intercourse with them, as we have seen, would derive instruction from them; and having commercial intercourse too with all the kingdoms of the earth, would acquire the knowledge of all arts and sciences. Hence they became, as declared in the prophecy of Ezekiel, the "honourable of the earth," and "the pride of human glory." See, then, a people like this, after trading with the British Isles, driven from their native shores by a Nebuchadnezzar and an Alexander, coming to these isles with all their intelligence, would they not have influence, and powerful influence, over an uncultivated race? Nor is this all: see them coming with ships, such as Ezekiel describes,

made of "fir-trees of Senir," of "cedars from Lebanon," of "the oaks of Bashan," whose "benches" were "ivory," whose "sails" were of "fine linen, with broidered work from Egypt," and "covered with blue and purple," with "the wise men of Tyrus" for their "pilots," and the ancients of Gebal and the wise men thereof for their "calkers." Who can wonder if they be caressed, and if the Britons be forward to imitate their customs and manners? Who can wonder, indeed, if, at length, they follow their idolatrous customs? See, then, now the Druids—their wise men, or magi, conducting all their religious rites and ceremonies, thereby further captivating their minds—assuming to themselves the whole administration of justice and the instruction of their youth. See them, at length, gaining such an ascendancy, as that the kings themselves submit to their counsels and decrees. Then, we are no longer surprised that they should learn from them to worship stupendous blocks of stone, or adopt their method of sacrificing; no longer that, as Paul speaks of the Galatians, they should worship such dumb idols, even as they were led. Our wonder will be still less excited, if we take into consideration the places that the Druids chose for the worship of their gods, and particularly for their solemn festivities. Oh! the inspiring effect of lofty hills and mountains, where all is grand and sublime; of deep and shady groves; of exalted and widely

extended plains; every thing above and around is calculated to inspire with awe, and in many cases with sacred dread. And, in such places, to see the Druidical priests and the Arch-Druid officiating in the sight of an assembled multitude; who can wonder that they are carried away as they are led. Nor is even this all—the feasts upon the sacrifices—the sports and amusements that followed, and the indulgence that idolatry in general gave to the irregular appetites and passions—all would tend to rivet their chains, to imprison their soul, and overspread their minds with darkness.

In conclusion, well may we congratulate ourselves and glorify God for our happy state as delivered from idolatry, and as possessing the Christian revelation. Here we have a Being revealed to us, "of whom and through whom and to whom are all things"—who "is a spirit"—is "light," and is "love;" and who is "the Great King" and Lawgiver and Judge of man. And whereas he is justly offended with man's transgression of his "holy" and "just" and "good" law, he yet of his wisdom and love has appointed a Mediator of reconciliation, one who, being both the Son of God and the Son of Man, is qualified to transact both for God and man. In this plan of mediation, through a sacrifice provided by the offended and not by the offender, we see how man may be pardoned and saved, and yet the authority

of the Divine law and the stability of the Divine government be secured; how the guilty conscience may be relieved and the most inquisitive and enlarged mind satisfied, while the justice of God is glorified and his holy name honoured: the sin is pardoned, and yet avenged—the sinner subdued and yet restored. By this revelation, also, we are instructed in the doctrine of a most holy, wise, and good Providence. Here, too, we have a most perfect rule and example of human conduct; and here the promise and prospect of a world to come. Nor is it the least recommendation of this "glorious gospel of the blessed God," that it is commanded to be "preached to every creature," and even to the chief of sinners; and that none are excluded from its blessings, but such as exclude themselves.

CHAPTER V.

A COMPENDIOUS ACCOUNT OF THE DRUIDS.

THAT, at the time of the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar, there existed a body of men called Druids, appears, not only from the concurrent testimony of historians, both ancient and modern, but from many places still existing that bear their name. There is a mountain near Chartres, in France, their principal seat, where their general assemblies were held and their public sacrifices offered, which is yet called, "The mountain of the Druids." In Denbighshire, in Wales, there is a parish called "Kerig-y-Druidion," or "Druids' Stones," from a couple of their altars still remaining there. There is, in the Isle of Anglesey, another remarkable seat of the Druids, a village called "Tre'r-Drew," the town of the Druid; and next to it a place named "Tre'r Beirdh," or Bard's-town; as there is also in another place of the same island a "Maen-y-Druu," that is, "The Druid's Stone;" and in Merionethshire, a "Caer-Dreuir," or "the city of the Druids." Many stone houses, called "Tighthenan Druidhneach," that is, "Druids' houses," are yet entire in the

Isle of Sky and also in some other isles. "Stanton," about seven miles from Bristol, of which we have spoken before as having several Druidical circles of stones, is called "Stanton Drew." "Rowl-Drwg," a circle of stones commonly called "Rolle-drich," in Oxfordshire, signifying the circle of the Druids, reminds us, too, of them.

Of the Druids there were three orders. Those properly called Druids, the Bards, and the Vaids. Some authors have considered all these as Druids; but Toland, author of the "History of the Druids," who perhaps was the best judge in this matter, states it otherwise. Perhaps he forms his opinion from Strabo, the well known ancient historian, who classes them as we have done, distinguishing the Bards and the Vaids from the Druids. However, the authors of the "Universal History" assign a very good reason for it, saying, that "as the Druids were more known to strangers than the rest, their name was given to all indifferently by ancient historians." We shall, however, denominate them all "Druids."

The word "Druid" some derive from the word δρυς, an oak, supposing that that name was given them on account of their sacred regard to the oak; but it may be objected to this, that the Druids had their name before the Greek language was known here; nor is it likely that they would take their name from a language foreign to their own. Other interpretations of the word there are; but it is

useless to discuss them; but we would observe that the most probable conjecture is that which derives it from "Druidh," which, in their own language, signifies "wise men;" for indeed it appears they were wise men, as far as related to what the Scriptures called "the wisdom of this world, which comes to nought." And they seemed to have been much the same as the wise men or "magicians" of Egypt, "the astrologers, the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators" of Babylon, and the Magi, or wise men of the East, who came and "presented gifts" to the infant Jesus. Pliny represents them as magicians, but expresses his abhorrence of magic. In accordance with this, Toland, speaking of the prevalence of Druidism in Ireland, says, that to this hour the ordinary word for "magician" is "Druid;" the art "magic" is called "Druidism;" and the wand which was one of the badges of the profession—"the rod of Druidism." The word "Druid," then, may be considered as synonymous with "wise man;" as before observed, "wise, according to the wisdom of this world," such as was then deemed so amongst the heathen, though, as has been seen already, and will be seen again, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." They were the priests, prophets, philosophers, poets, magistrates, and physicians of the people, and it is said that the very word "Druidhé, in the Gaelic language, is

the word for a natural philosopher or magician, and the only one. From some of the monuments of antiquity that remain, reared under their direction, they are considered as being acquainted with astronomy and mechanics, as they probably were with other branches of the arts and sciences; and, if the hypothesis maintained in the foregoing sheets be admitted, we shall not wonder at this their knowledge; for, coming from a country that not only lay contiguous to Egypt and the land of Israel (the one, even in Moses' time famed for "wisdom;" and the other, on account of their doctrines and laws, might, at least, have been a "wise and an understanding people;") but also that possessed commercial intercourse with "all the kingdoms of the earth," they might well be supposed to acquire much information.

And in this way, amongst others, we may account for the ascendancy they gained over the minds of the people, especially as we understand from the writers of those times, such as Cæsar, that they confined their knowledge to themselves and their scholars. That they had such ascendancy, all authors agree. They, in fact, appear to have possessed an absolute command over the people. They were the rulers, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, in the affairs of religion and of the state; nor would the kings of the different states of Britain declare war or make peace, or deliberate in council, without them. "Without

the Druids, who understand divination and philosophy," says Dion Chrysostom, "the kings may neither do or consult anything: so that, in reality, they are the Druids who reign, while the kings, though they sit on golden thrones, dwell in spacious palaces, and feed on costly dishes, are only their ministers, and the executioners of their sentence."* "The king was accustomed ever to have a Druid about his person, to pray and sacrifice, as well as to be judge for determining emergent controversies, though he had a civil judge besides. So he had one of the chief lords to advise him, a Bard to sing the praises of his ancestors, a chronicler to register his own actions, a physician to take care of his health, a musician to entertain him. Whoever was absent, these by law must be ever present, and no fewer than three controllers of his family; which triumvirate was the institution of king Cormac. The same custom was taken up by all the nobles, whereof each had about him his Druid, chief vassal, bard, judge, physician, and harper; the four last having lands assigned them, which descended to their families, wherein these professions were hereditary."† It appears from the same author, that, "after the introduction of Christianity, the Druid was succeeded by a bishop or priest, but the rest continued on the ancient foot; insomuch that, for a long time after the English conquest, the judges,

* In Toland, p. 187. † Ibid. p. 89.

the bards, physicians, and harpers, held such tenures in Ireland." Thus, he says also, that "the O'Duvegons were the hereditary bards of the O'Kellies; the O'Clerys and the O'Brodins were also hereditary antiquaries; the O'Sheils and the O'Canvans were such hereditary doctors; the Maglanchys such hereditary judges; and so of the rest."

It does not appear that any were excluded from the privileges of this Druidical body, provided they would undergo the mental labour required of them in their schools; and mental labour it was, for it being a sacred maxim with them "not to commit anything to writing, but to couch all their mysteries and learning in verse," they were obliged to learn every thing by heart, and these verses had so increased in course of time, that "it took some of them twenty years to learn the whole, nor could they be admitted to the sacred order, unless on examination they could repeat many thousands of verses." Thus it was they kept, doubtless, a very great majority of the people in ignorance. Between Chartres and Dreux, in Gaul, was their great school, but they had public schools in different parts of Gaul; and, as Cæsar intimates that the Gauls came to Britain to be instructed, we may conclude that they were not less instructed in the doctrines of their religion, and in the sciences, in Britain. And though the difficulty of acquiring a sufficient stock of learning for

admission into the order of Druids would deter most from the attempt, yet the privilege this body had of exemption from bearing arms, and from taxes, in connexion with their authority and power, would prompt many to enter their schools. The great points of their religion which they inculcated, were three: the worship of their gods; the abstaining from all evil; and courage in war: and to this latter, as accompanied with the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, is attributed their intrepidity.

As observed before, besides the Druids, properly so called, there were the Bards and Vaids. The Druids were the priests. As such, they had the direction and offering of the sacrifices, and the management of their religious concerns. The Bards sang the praises of their gods and of their heroes, accompanying them with the harp, and perhaps other musical instruments. These Bards also played on instruments, and sang at the head of their armies before and after battle, to excite the valour of the soldiers, or to mortify them when they had failed in their duty. They were also the poets of the day. The remains of this order of men we may notice to this day in Wales, also in the Highlands of Scotland, and in Ireland.

There were the Vaids also; in Latin, "Vates," prophets. These were the diviners, professing to tell future events by auguries and omens taken from the entrails of victims, and from the

course of the blood, as well as from other occurrences and events. These Bards and Vaids, or Eubages, were, however, under the direction and dominion of the Druid priests; for Strabo informs us, that the Druids were in the highest power, and gave laws to the Vates and Bards, "who were every where to give them place, when they pleased to challenge it, and were not allowed to do any thing without their consent and approbation."* There were also Druidesses, or female Druids, who were a sort of prophetesses;† and perhaps those common fortune-telling women, and witches, of whom some of us have heard, may be considered as the remains or imitators of them. Over all, there was one that presided, as a sort of sovereign pontiff, and he was called the Arch-Druid, who was chosen by a plurality of votes; and when a dispute arose concerning it, it was terminated by the sword.

Under the direction of these Druids, there were three feasts observed annually; one on the first of May; another at Midsummer; and a third on the first of November: the first to obtain a blessing on the fruits of the earth, that they might prosperously grow; the second for the same, as being

* Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 364.

† Toland informs us that, "in Gealcossa's Mount, in the county of Donegal, in Ireland, a Druidess of that name lived; and on that hill is her grave and her temple, which the old Irish at this day dare not any way profane."

ready for gathering; and the third was a thanksgiving on finishing their harvests. Fires were made and sacrifices offered on all these anniversaries. Toland's account of this last anniversary, that on the first of November, is interesting, and therefore we shall give it in his own words. "On the eve of this day all the people of the country, out of a religious persuasion, instilled into them by their Druids, extinguished their fires entirely. Then every master of a family was religiously obliged to take a portion of the consecrated fire (the fire from the carns where the sacrifices were offered) home, and to kindle the fire anew in his house, which for the ensuing year was to be lucky and prosperous. He was to pay, however, for his future happiness, whether the event proved answerable or not; and though his house should be afterwards burnt, yet he was to deem it the punishment of some new sin, or ascribe it to anything rather than to want of virtue in the consecration of the fire, or of validity in the benediction of the Druid." And, "if any man had not cleared with the Druids for the last year's dues, he was neither to have a spark of this holy fire from the carns, nor durst any of his neighbours let him take the benefit of theirs, under pain of excommunication, which, as managed by the Druids, was worse than death. If he would brew, therefore, or bake, or roast, or boil, or warm himself and family; in a word, if he would live the winter out, the Druids'

dues must be paid by the last of October."* It is easy to see how such a custom as this would confirm the power of the Druids over the people. Besides these three annual feasts, they had another great annual festival on their "New-year's-day, the tenth of March, which was the day of seeking, cutting, and consecrating their wonder-working 'all-heal,' or mistletoe of oak."† Of this ceremony Pliny gives us an account, as practised in his time, and which we shall give in his words, as translated by Holland. Having remarked that these Druids esteemed nothing more sacred in the world than the mistletoe of the oak, and the oak on which it groweth, and that they purposely chose groves of oak for their religious service; and that they performed no sacred service, or offered sacrifices, without branches and leaves of it, he proceeds to speak of the devout manner in which they gathered the mistletoe, and the many ceremonies that accompanied it, meaning on the annual festival above mentioned. "First and foremost," says he, "they observe principally that the moon be just six days old (for upon that day they begin their months and new years, yea, and their several ages, which have their revolutions every thirty years), because she is thought then to be of great power and force sufficient, and is not yet come to her half-light and the end of her first quarter. They call it the mistletoe, in their language, 'all-heal,' (for they

* Toland, p. 105. † Ibid. 107.

have an opinion of it that it cureth all maladies whatsoever,) and when they are about to gather it, after they have well and duly prepared their sacrifices and festival-cheer under the said tree, they bring thither two young bullocks, milk-white, such as yet never drew in yoke at plough or wain, and whose heads were then, and not before, bound by the horn. Which done, the priest, arrayed in a surplice, or white vesture, climbeth up into the tree, and with a golden hook or bill cutteth it off, and they beneath receive it in a white soldier's cassock, or coat of arms. Then they fall to kill the beasts aforesaid for sacrifice, mumbling many oraisons, and praying devoutly that it would please God to bless this gift of his to the good and benefit of all those to whom he had vouchsafed to give it." Such is Pliny's account of the ceremony, and then he remarks: "Now this persuasion they have of mistletoe thus gathered, that what living creature soever (otherwise barren) do drink of it, will presently become fruitful: thereupon, also, that it is a sovereign counterpoison, of singular remedy against all vermin. So vain and superstitious are many nations in the world, and oftentimes in such frivolous and foolish things as these."*

Besides that on these annual or stated festivals, they offered their sacrifices and performed their religious rites, or some of them at least, they established judicatories, in which they decided on

* Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. xvi. c. 44.

criminal cases, as well as settled controversies. "Within the groves where they worshipped were mounts called Gorseddan, where they sat and pronounced their decrees. Some of these mounts were made square, and some round, and are to be seen in many places in Wales to this day."* "And," says Moore, speaking of Ireland, "on the eve of the feast of Sanhim all those whom, in the month of March preceding, the Druids had, from their tribunal on Mount Usneach, condemned to death, were, in pursuance of this solemn sentence, burned between two fires."†

Besides that the Druids acted the part of the priest—of the prophet—of the poet—and of the judge, we find also that they acted the part of the magician, in which was included that of the physician, for the healing art in their hand was, in part at least, a magical art. And here we shall refer to Pliny, whose authority and general accuracy will not be disputed. And we include this subject in our dissertation the rather, because the Britons were particularly addicted to magic,‡ of which some indications remain, even to this day, in our "wise men" and "fortune-tellers,"

* Owen's Hist of the Anc. Brit. vol. i. p. 15.

† Moore's Ireland, vol. i. p. 25.

‡ Says Pliny, "Verily in Britain at this day it is highly honoured, where the people are so wholly devoted to it, with all reverence and religious observation of ceremonies, that a man would think the Persians first learned all their magic from them." —Lib. xxx. c. 1.

and "prognosticators," to our disgrace be it spoken! Pliny, as we have observed before, called the Druids "magicians," and he takes some pains to expose their art. He represents it as of all others the "most full of fraud, deceit, and cozenage," while he says, "there never was one throughout the whole world professed with so much credit, or so long upheld and maintained." It insinuated itself, he thinks, under the pretence of maintaining health, curing and preventing diseases, and considers it as having fortified itself "under the cloak of religion," and by gratifying the natural desire which men have of knowing future events. Having taken possession of men's minds, it was "reputed by most nations of the earth as the chief of all sciences." He represents it as practised in divers ways: water, globes or balls, the air, the stars, fire, light, basons and axes being all called in to its aid or service. It pretended to the foreknowledge of future events; it raised and conjured up ghosts of men departed; and it dealt with familiar and infernal spirits. After thus declaring its nature, he pronounces sentence upon it as "a detestable and abominable art, grounded upon no certain rules; full of lies and vanity, however it may seem to carry some shew of verity in it." Thus Pliny; and who but must bewail man's sin and folly in this matter!—not "liking to retain God in their knowledge," as the Apostle Paul

says, they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." And the same apostle instructs us in the reason why people are under such "strong delusions to believe a lie," even because they "have not the truth," but "have pleasure in unrighteousness."

Thus Pliny, speaking concerning these magicians, adverts to the doctrine of human sacrifice. He says that, during the consulates of Cornelius Lepidus and Licius Crassus, "there passed a decree of the senate, forbidding expressly the killing of man for sacrifice," whereby we may evidently see, that until this inhibition or restraint came forth, our progenitors and ancestors were given to these "inhuman and monstrous sacrifices." And he adds, "no question but that this art of magic was professed in Gaul, and continued until our days: for no longer is it ago than the time of Tiberius Cæsar that their Druids were by his authority put down, together with all such physicians, prophets, and wizards." Here, then, Pliny plainly intimates, not only that the custom of sacrificing men prevailed, but that it was a doctrine of the Druids. Yes, and Cæsar, in his "Commentaries," declares it of our countrymen, the Britons. His words, when translated, are these: "they (the Britons) have huge figures, made of wicker, which they fill with men alive;

and having set fire to them, being surrounded with flame, the men are consumed."* Criminals, it is supposed, were the usual victims in these sacrifices; but sometimes, for want of them, the innocent were burned. Ah! how this reminds us of the Phœnician practice of "offering their sons and their daughters to Moloch," that is, the sun, as "the king" of heaven, as Moloch or Molech imports!† If such was their magic, we need not wonder that Pliny should say concerning it, "The benefit is inestimable that the world hath received by the great providence of our Romans, who have abolished these monstrous and abominable arts,

* "Illi immania simulachra magnitudine habent, quorum contexta viminibus membra, vivis hominibus complent, quibus succensis circumventi flamma, exanimantur homines."—Cæs. Comment. lib. vi.

† It was a leading doctrine with the Druids, according to Cæsar, that, "for the life of man nothing less than the life of man could be rendered, and that the Divinity could not otherwise be appeased;"‡ and hence, probably, human sacrifices; for, overlooking the great sacrifice of a man that God himself would provide, and supposing that the blood of beasts could not take away sin, they offered men of their own providing. Which idea accords with what Dr. Scott says: "It was a principle generally received by men of all nations and religions (however it came to pass, I know not), that for sinful men to appease the incensed Divinity, it was necessary first, that some life should be sacrificed to him by way of satisfaction for their sins; and that the nobler it was, the more propitious it rendered him."

‡ Cæsar's words are: "Quod pro vitâ hominis nisi vita hominis reddatur, non posse aliter deorum immortalium numen placare, arbitrantur."

which, under the shew of religion, murdered men for sacrifices to please the gods; and under the colour of physic, prescribed the flesh to be eaten as most wholesome meat." And greater reason have we to bless God for causing the Sun of righteousness to arise upon a benighted world, with a view to chase away that darkness, under the power of which not only this, but all other abominations have been committed.

From the statements above given, we may form some idea of the sort of men that once had such an ascendancy over the minds of the Britons; and we have reason to bless that overruling Providence, which, partly by the Romans, and partly by the introduction of Christianity, has long since delivered these isles from such dominion. We say, partly by the Romans, for, say the authors of the "Universal History," "several emperors took an effectual method to suppress the Druidish power, by issuing out some severe edicts against the bloody custom of offering human sacrifices." And this they did not only on account of their abhorrence of such inhuman proceedings, but because they felt jealous of the power that these Druids had acquired over the people that they had now brought under their own government. Toland's remarks, too, are worthy of being introduced here. "It must needs be from a full conviction of the Druidical fraudulent superstitions, and barbarous tyranny exercised over the

credulous people, that these same Romans, who tolerated all religions, yet suppressed this institution in Gaul and Britain with the utmost severity. Indeed their human sacrifices, with their pretended magic, and an authority incompatible with the power of the magistrate, were things not to be endured by so wise a state as that of the Romans."* The introduction of Christianity, too, would tend to the abolition of their power and influence, as well as to the extinction of them.

It appears, however, according to the remark of the author last cited, that "the Druids were not immediately extinguished, but only their barbarous, tyrannical, or illusory usages." And, doubtless, they and their religion were suppressed *gradually*, and as the Romans proceeded in the conquest of the country. Some idea may be formed of the opposition the Druids gave them, by a passage in Tacitus, a Roman historian, when giving an account of the attack of the Romans upon Anglesey, then very populous, being "a constant harbour for all fugitives," and a chief seat of the Druids. We shall give it in the words of Owen, in his "History of the ancient Britons," who seems to take it from Camden:—"Suetonius Paulinus, the most renowned general of his age, no sooner arrived at his government, than he formed the design of reducing the island Mona,

* Toland, p. 88.

now Anglesey, at that time very populous and the chief seat of the Druids. To this end he built flat-bottomed boats to carry over the foot, providing against a shallow and uncertain shore, and then ordered the horse to follow; part of which forded, and part swam over. On the other side stood numerous multitudes of men and women. The women in black, with their hair loose about their shoulders, carrying torches in their hands, and running about like so many furies; whilst the Druids, with hands lifted up to heaven, poured forth direful execrations, and called to their deities for vengeance. The strangeness of the sight at first so surprised the Romans, that they stood stock still, with their bodies exposed to the darts of the enemy; till, at last, being roused and animated by the exhortations of their general, they rushed forward with such impetuosity, that they bore down all before them, and involved them in the devouring flames of their own sacrifice. The island being thus easily reduced, a garrison was placed to secure his new conquests, and all the consecrated groves cut down; for in them they used to sacrifice the captives taken in war, and inspect their entrails, in order to know the will of their deities." * Thus Owen, according to Tacitus, and the event took place in the year 61. And from this time we may suppose that they declined; though, from a fact

* Owen, vol. i. p. 53.

mentioned by Procopius, of which he was himself an eye-witness, Druidism does not appear to have been extinct in Gaul before the sixth or seventh century; which fact was, that Theodebert I. having penetrated into Italy at the head of a considerable army, and taken possession of the bridge of Pavia, his men offered in sacrifice the wives and children of the Goths. "For," says this Procopius, "the Franks, though Christians, do still observe a great many of their ancient superstitions. They offer up human victims, and use many execrable rites in their auguries." *

* In Univ. Hist. vol. vii. p. 365.

ON THE

ORIGIN AND DESIGN

OF THE

PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT AND THE ROUND TOWERS OF IRELAND.

WELL-KNOWN as these stupendous monuments of antiquity are to the learned and scientific—since this work may fall into the hands of such as may not form a just conception of their structure—we shall present the reader with a representation of them as given us by M. Rollin, taken from Herodotus and Pliny, &c. amongst the ancients. "A pyramid," says he, "is a solid or hollow body, having a large and generaliy a square base, and terminating in a point." Of the pyramids of Egypt one was more famous than the rest. It "was built on a rock, having a square base, cut on the outside as so many steps, and decreasing gradually quite to the summit. It was built with stones of a prodigious size, the least of which were thirty feet, wrought with wonderful art, and covered with hieroglyphics. According to several

ancient authors, each side was eight hundred feet broad, and as many high. The summit of the pyramid, which to those who viewed it from below seemed a point, was a fine platform, composed of ten or twelve massy stones, and each side of that platform sixteen or eighteen feet long. An hundred thousand men were constantly employed about this work, and were relieved every three months by the same number. Ten complete years were spent in hewing out the stones, either in Arabia or Ethiopia, and in conveying them to Egypt; and twenty years more in building this immense edifice, the inside of which contained numberless rooms and apartments. There was expressed on the pyramid, in Egyptian characters, the sums it cost only in garlick, leeks, onions, and the like, for the workmen; and the whole amounted to sixteen hundred talents of silver"—413,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* sterling, according to the authors of the Universal History,—" from whence it was easy to conjecture what a vast sum the whole must have amounted to." Thus far Rollin. This pyramid, according to Pliny, occupied eight acres of land, and modern travellers say eleven. Herodotus says, that there were subterraneous apartments belonging to it; and another thing remarkable concerning it is, that " the sides of it stand exactly facing the four quarters of the world, and that the tomb, so called, within is in the same position."

Concerning the *interior* of this pyramid, the authors of "the Ancient Universal History" give us a particular account. They speak of an entrance—of very long galleries—chambers—antechambers—closets—passages—benches—square holes—and many parts as most curiously wrought, and of rich materials, such as white and smooth and polished marble. And, in the midst of the pyramid, they say, there is a magnificent and spacious chamber, "as it were in its heart and centre, equidistant from all the sides, and almost in the midst, between the basis and the top. The floor, the sides, and the roof of it are all made of vast and exquisite tables of Thebaic marble, which, if they were not obscured by the smoke of torches, would appear glittering and shining. From the top of it descending to the bottom, there are about six ranges of stone, all which being respectively sized to an equal height, very gracefully in one and the same altitude run round the room. The stones which cover this chamber are of a stupendous length, like so many huge beams lying flat and traversing the room, and withal supporting that infinite mass and weight of the pyramid above. Of these there are nine, which cover the roof; two of them are less by half in breadth than the rest, the one at the east end, the other at the west. The length of the chamber on the south side, most accurately taken at the joist or line where the first and second row of stones meet, is

34·380* English feet; the breadth of the west side, at the joist or line where the first and second row of stones meet, is 17·190 feet, and the height 19 feet and a half."

"Within this glorious room," add they, "stand the monument of Cheops, or Chemmis, of one piece of marble, hollow within, uncovered at the top, and sounding like a bell." "Some write that the body has been removed hence, but it has been already observed, that the founder was not buried in it. This monument is of the same kind of stone with which the whole room is lined, being a speckled marble, with black, white, and red spots, as it were equally mixed, which some call Thebaic marble." "The figure of the tomb is like an altar, or two cubes finely set together: it is cut smooth and plain without any sculpture or engraving. The outward superfices is in length 7 feet 3 inches and a half, and in depth 3 feet 3 inches and three-quarters. The hollow side is in length, on the west side, 6,488 feet; in breadth, at the north end, 2,218 feet; and in depth 2,800 feet. It stands exactly in the meridian, or due north and south, and as it were equidistant from all sides of the chamber, except the east, from whence it is doubly remoter than from the west. Under it there is a little hollow space dug away, and a large stone in the pavement removed at the angle

* Rather more than 34¼ feet, for it is reckoned by decimals.

next adjoining to it. In the south and north sides of the chamber there are two inlets opposite to one another, seven-tenths of a foot broad, four-tenths of a foot deep, evenly cut, and running in a straight line six feet and farther into the thickness of the wall: that on the south side is larger and somewhat round, not so long as the former, and by the blackness within seems to have been made use of for setting of lamps in." *

Such are the extracts from these authors which we have thought it requisite to give, not only for the gratification of curiosity, but in order to form a just conception of the subject of these pyramids. And in discussing it, there are three questions that occur to our minds. 1. Whence the funds and labour by which they might be erected? 2. How the materials for such immense structures could be procured, and conveyed, and placed? And, 3. For what purposes were they built? As to the first question—no European monarch could have funds sufficient at his disposal, nor is it easy to conceive how any Asiatic king could provide them in the common course of events.† But the Scripture supplies us with a solution of the difficulty. In the time of Joseph there was a famine in the land of Egypt: that famine was so extreme,

* Univ. Hist. pp. 187—189.

† Thevenot remarks, that no prince now in the world (without disparagement to any) is able to raise such a pile of buildings.—See Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 192.

that for the sake of obtaining food from the stores that had been laid up through the wisdom of Joseph, the Egyptians not only parted with their money and cattle, but also with themselves and their lands. In this extremity, what did Joseph? He bought all their lands for Pharaoh, and then returned them all but a fifth part to be reserved for the king. Now in this way, how great must have been the revenue of Pharaoh, and how great must have been his accumulation of wealth in a course of years! And being at the disposal of their kings in succession, how easy to conceive of their ability to employ their subjects in such structures, especially as, through the fertilising effect of the overflowing of the Nile, such subjects would not be employed in agricultural labour, as other nations must necessarily be. Thus, then, we can, in the light of Scripture, account for the supply of both funds and labour for these and other stupendous structures, for which Egypt has been so celebrated.

The second question that occurs is, How the materials for such immense buildings could be procured, and how they could be conveyed and placed in their respective positions? For an answer to which question we refer the reader to what has been already said concerning Stonehenge; and we shall add to it the statement of Herodotus. After speaking of a causeway for conveyance of the stones—a work of ten years—"the ascent of the

pyramid," says he, "was regularly graduated by what some call steps, and others altars. Having finished the first flight, they elevated the stones to the second by the aid of machines constructed of short pieces of wood; from the second by a similar engine, they were raised to the third, and so on to the summit. Thus there were as many machines as there were regular divisions in the centre of the pyramid, though in fact there might only be one, which, being easily manageable, might be removed from one range of the building to another, as often as occasion made it necessary: both modes have been told, and I know not which best deserves credit. The summit of the pyramid was first of all finished, descending thence, they regularly completed the whole." *

But another difficult and interesting question occurs. For what purposes were these stupendous buildings erected? Were they designed for astronomical observation? If so, why all those chambers and galleries, such numberless rooms and apartments, built too of such costly materials? Is this "the wisdom of the Egyptians?" Was it to convey to the remotest period their national history, by means of the hieroglyphic characters written thereon? But why in hieroglyphics, their sacred language, a language that would be generally unknown? Besides, they might have erected

* Beloe's Herodotus, p. 113.

immense pillars for this purpose. Moreover, time and the weather might obliterate them. Nor need they construct such chambers and incur such expense in the interior. As repositories of corn? Would the wisdom of the Egyptians devise a structure so costly, so adorned in the interior for such a purpose. Were the pyramids, then, as generally supposed, for the sepulchres of their kings? Herodotus says, that the vaults of the hill upon which the pyramids are erected, were intended as a place of burial for Cheops, who himself is the reported builder of the largest of them, but he does not say that the pyramid itself was so intended. Besides, if for a sepulchral purpose, why such numberless rooms and apartments, and why built with such costly materials? It is true that the most ancient record in the world, the book of Job, speaks of "kings and counsellors of the earth building desolate places for themselves;"* but this they might do, and yet these pyramids might not be built for such purposes. Aided by the light of Scripture, as before, we will venture to suggest, that they were not built for one purpose alone, but for several purposes. 1. For a sacred purpose.† The tomb in the interior, which

* Job, iii. 14.

† At Benares pyramids are seen corresponding in all respects save that of size, to those in Egypt, having also subterranean passages beneath them, which are said to extend even for miles together.—O'Brian, on the Round Towers of Ireland, p. 74. And

by the way can scarcely be called a tomb, not having a covering, might be the repository or shrine or pedestal of their supreme divinity: the "galleries, chambers, antechambers, closets, passages, benches, square holes, &c. might be for the residence and convenience of the priests: and around the pyramid, on their set feasts, might the people be assembled for worship. Let it be recollected that Solomon's temple had its chambers for the priests, &c. If the buildings were not of a sacred character, why covered with hieroglyphics, which were sacred? Would such expense be incurred for any other than a sacred purpose? Was it not usual among the heathen to enshrine their deities within temples or immense buildings? Did not the heathen imagine that in some way or other the spirit of the god inhabited or rendered sacred the object of worship, even that of obelisks or pillars? Indeed it does appear that such structures were worshipped as images of deities.* Coetlogon, under the head "hieroglyphic," has the following remark:—"By the figure of a triangular pyramid or obelisk, the ancients understood the divinity, as considering the number three the most perfect number." Not that the pyramid

he thinks that pyramids were built for religion and science. On hearing Wilford's description of them, the Brahmins said that they were places appropriated to the worship of Padma-devi.

* Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 186; from Solin. Polyhist. c. 45; Ammian. Marcel. l. 23.

itself perhaps was the object, but the god that was supposed to dwell in it or around it.

Let the reader advert again to the description of monument called "the tomb," and consider its structure and its situation, and perhaps he will see that it was more probably designed for the shrine, or for a pedestal of a deity, than for the tomb of a king. The idea of a god dwelling in a temple is familiar with every one who has read sacred or profane history. It is often recognised in Scripture. It was so by Stephen, the proto-martyr, when he declared of the true God, in contradistinction to false gods, that "he dwelleth not in temples made with hands," and by Paul at Athens. The famous temple of Diana likewise was built to be a residence of their goddess. Why then might not this receptacle in the centre of the magnificent chamber in which it was placed be the seat of the Egyptian deity, and the pyramid be held sacred on account of it, and itself be a place of assembly for the worshiping Egyptians? Moreover, the chambers of the pyramids and all were dark, and so were the counsels and oracles of the heathen pronounced, and their works done in the dark. "Wo unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark." "I have not spoken in a dark place of the earth." And they had their "chambers of imagery." "Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel" (after the

abominations of the heathen) "do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery?" * Nay, from a passage in holy writ, we might suppose that the ancients imagined that their deities dwelt in "the thick darkness." †

2. Another purpose for which the pyramids were built might be, that of *storing up treasure*, either sacred treasures or royal treasures. Thus we account for the chambers and galleries. Somewhere must the sacred offerings be deposited, and why not here? We read of the treasures of the house of the Lord frequently in relation to the temple of Solomon; and we read also of treasure-chambers and of persons being appointed over these treasures. Read only one or two passages out of Nehemiah:—"A great chamber,"—in the house of God too—"where aforetime they laid the meat-offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests." Again, "Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn, and the new wine, and the oil, unto the treasuries. And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelamiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites Pedaiah," &c. ‡ Or were they for *royal* treasures? Solomon gathered together "the peculiar treasure of kings

* Isaiah, xxix. 15; xlv. 19; Ezek. viii. 12.

† 2 Chron. vi. 1. ‡ Neh. xiii. 5, 12, and 13.

and provinces," and so had doubtless other kings attempted to do. Hezekiah, king of Judah, "made himself treasuries for silver and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels; storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil." And might not the kings of Egypt do the same? The king of Babylon had a treasure-house, and a treasure-house of his god too; for he is said to bring "all the vessels belonging to the temple at Jerusalem into it." And Cyrus, king of Persia, was to have given him not only treasures, but "the treasures of *darkness*, and the hidden riches of *secret places*." * Why not the king of Egypt secure his treasures in the "darkness," and "secret places" of these pyramids? Add to all this, that while Josephus reports that Israel were employed in constructing these pyramids, the Scripture says, that they built "treasure cities" for Pharaoh.

3. In addition to these purposes they might be designed for *sepulchres*. There were vaults beneath where Herodotus says that Cheops was buried, and these vaults, or subterranean passages, might be the burying-places of their kings and priests. Indeed the authors of the "Universal History" quote "Diodorus as expressly telling us that Chemmis and Cephron designed those (pyramids) built by them for their sepulchres, and Strabo, they say, judges all those near Memphis"

* Isaiah, xlv. 3.

to have been royal sepulchres: to which the writings of the Arabs are consonant. But, after all, this might be only one object. Indeed, if that were the only object, why a building of such kind? Why such chambers and galleries, antechambers, closets, benches, &c. &c.? Why such a costly and curious interior? More in accordance, then, with the wisdom of the Egyptians is it to suppose, that the pyramids were designed for several important purposes, than for one, and whether those suggested be probable or improbable must now be left to the judgment of the reader. In conclusion, however, we may just observe, that it is somewhat remarkable that the two latter ideas should meet together in the mind of Job, when wishing that he had "died from the womb." "Then," says he, "I should have lain still and been quiet; I should have slept: then had I been at rest; with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves, or with princes that had gold, who filled their houses with silver."*

ROUND TOWERS OF IRELAND.

From the "Gentleman's Magazine,"† it appears that there are from forty-two to ninety-six

* Job, iii. 13—15. † Feb. 1838, p. 134.

of these round towers throughout Ireland; that their form is conical, that their height is from 20 to 130 feet, and their circumference at the base from 30 to 60 feet; that they have from four to eight stories, and that the thickness of their walls is from 2 feet 8 inches to 4 feet 3 inches. Mr. O'Brian, who has written fully on these towers, makes a statement somewhat different. His account is as follows:—"They are in height from 50 to 150 feet; their diameter at the base is generally about 14 feet, and the inside measuring about 8, which decreases gradually, but imperceptibly, to the top, where it may be considered as about 6 feet in the interior. The distance of the door from the level of the ground varies from 4 to 20 feet." He says, also, "that, with two exceptions, all have a row of apertures towards the top, just under the projecting roof. In general, the number is four, and then they correspond to the cardinal points of the heavens. In three instances there is one aperture towards the summit, in one instance there are five, in one six, in one seven, in one eight. Inside they are perfectly empty from the door upwards, but most of them are divided by rests or projecting stones into lofts or stories, varying in number from three to eight." Moreover, he remarks, "that there is a striking perfection observable in their construction, in that an inimitable perpendicular is invariably maintained."

Such are the round towers of Ireland. Now, what is their *origin*—what their *design?** In accordance with the principles insisted on in the preceding essays, we conceive that they are of Phœnician origin, and that consequently they are very ancient. Having already shewn that these isles were peopled, at least to a great degree, from Phœnicia, and that their manners and customs obtained in them, it is easy to conceive how buildings might be erected by them of a similar kind, and for similar purposes with those that were erected in the parent country. Now, it is a fact, that in Phœnicia there have been found buildings not a little resembling these. The authors of the "Ancient Universal History," in their account of the Phœnicians, speak of, and indeed have given us a plate of two of these, seen a little southward of the isle of Aradas, about ten yards distant from each other. "The one is in form a cylinder, crowned by a multilateral pyramid, and is in all 33 feet high including the pedestal, which is 10 feet high and 15 square. The other is a long cone, discontinued at about the third part of its height, and, instead of ending in a point, is wrought into a hemispherical form. This is its general construction. It stands upon a pedestal, six feet

* Should the author fail of giving satisfaction, it may disarm censure if he quote a remark of Higgins, in his "Celtic Druids:" "The object for which they were built has set all antiquaries at defiance."—P. 216, also p. xlvi.

high and sixteen feet six inches square, adorned at each angle with the figure of a lion in a sitting posture, pretty much defaced; though at best the sculpture of them appears to have been but bad. Under ground there are square chambers, of convenient height for a man, and long cells branching out therefrom, variously disposed, and of different lengths, wherein the dead bodies were deposited. These subterraneous chambers and cells are all cut out of the hard rock." * The connexion of such structures as these with the round towers of Ireland will perhaps appear to the reader, especially after reading the foregoing pages. And if, to such considerations, we add what is farther to be advanced on the design of such buildings, the probability, we presume, will appear still greater that they are of Phœnician origin.

We pass on, then, to consider their *design*. Many hypotheses have been advanced on this subject. Some think that they were purgatorial columns, to which criminals were raised for the ablution of their enormities; others, that they were intended for beacons—others for belfries—others, again, think that they were designed for anchorites; and, with much greater probability, some that they were places of retreat in cases of invasion. But some of these hypotheses appear so unsatisfactory, that they scarcely need a formal

* Univ. Hist. vol. i. p. 396.

refutation, and others will come into consideration when we treat of the affirmative of the question. The hypothesis of Mr. O'Brian is, that they "were specifically constructed for the twofold purpose of worshiping the sun and moon, as the authors of generation and vegetation;" and, from the nearer converse which their elevation afforded, of studying the revolutions and properties of the planetary orbs."* So far as this hypothesis supposes that they were erected for a sacred purpose, we concur in it; nor can we object to the idea that regard was had to the study of the revolutions and properties of the heavenly bodies: but we still think that, by the aid of those principles that have been insisted on in the preceding essays, and particularly from that most ancient record the Scriptures, additional light may be thrown upon these antiquities.

First, then, we conceive that they were erected for the purpose of religious worship and for religious assemblies. Our reasons for thinking so are these. The ancient Irish themselves, according to O'Brian, designated them Bail-toir, that is, the tower of Baal, or the sun, and the priest who attended them, "Aoi Bailtoir," or "superintendent of Baal's tower."† Now, after what we have before advanced concerning the worship of Baal in Phœnicia, as transferred to Ireland, who will not

* O'Brian's Round Towers of Ireland, pp. 61, 62.

† O'Brian, p. 75.

see the connexion between such towers and religious worship? And, whereas it was customary among the heathen to connect dancing around the sacred place with their worship, it is remarkable that the phrase "turret dance" still obtains in Ireland, a phrase which signifies a dance in connexion with a tower, for the Latin word "turris" signifies a tower. There are also, it seems, "turrish-penances," which relate to religious circuits round the tower.*

Hence, also, for religious *assemblies*. It is a fact that churches and other religious foundations generally exist near them; which can easily be accounted for, if we suppose that, in order to facilitate the introduction of Christianity, the first preachers of Christ accommodated themselves to the prejudices and feelings of the people, by erecting these edifices on the spot where the people had been accustomed to gather together for worship; but not otherwise.† And the fact we may therefore use as an indirect, or presumptive argument at least, that the tower was a rallying point—a place of general assembly. We remark, again, Phœnicia was near to the Land of Israel; now, in that part of the country,

* "A particular movement, still in common use, called rinke-tempoil, or the temple-dance. Also turrish-penance—a religious circuit round a tower."—O'Brian.

† In Ardmore there is one with a cross upon it.

we read of a "tower of the flock;"* and a thousand years before, of a "tower of Edar," which means the same. Now, what is meant by this first passage of Scripture? That Jerusalem was not only a "strong hold of the daughter of Sion," as it immediately follows, but that there was the place of general assembly of all the males in the land three times a year for worship; and, since that people were called "sheep," and God their Shepherd, therefore this place of assembly was called a "tower of the flock," in allusion to the custom of shepherds gathering their sheep together to the tower, as at the "tower of Edar." What, then, if the Phœnician shepherds, the Druidical priests, gathered their sheep—their people, around these towers? Perhaps, also, the chambers—for it appears there were chambers in them—were the residences of these priests, as the chambers were in the sacred temple at Jerusalem.† Thus far, then, we have seen that the tower was called the tower of Baal, the object of worship in Phœnicia and in Ireland; that certain persons are

* Mic. iv. 8; Gen. xxxv. 21.

† These chambers, it appears from O'Brian, were "most of them divided—either by rests or projecting stones." Now the sacred historian, speaking of the chambers in the Temple of Solomon, says, "he made narrowed rests round about, that the beams should not be fastened in the walls of the house." Recollect that Hiram, who assisted Solomon, was a Phœnician. See 1 Kings, vi. 6; v. 18; vii. 13, 14, 40, &c.

mentioned as priests of the tower of Baal; that the expressions, "turret-dance," and "turret-penance," still obtain amongst the Irish; we have seen, also, that Christian places of worship are found there, and that an analogy has been traced between the name of the assembly in the country bordering upon Phœnicia and these so named towers of Ireland: what then remains, but the inference that they were places for religious worship, and religious assembling? To this we may add, that "traces of the apparatus for a bell have been found on one of these round towers;" which might be, as O'Brian remarks, for "summoning together the people for public worship."*

Or there might be a *hold* or *house* of their god Baal near the spot, and the tower might be for its defence. A remarkable fact occurs in the Book of Judges, which may illustrate our meaning. The men, or baalites or lords (as the Hebrew word imports), of the tower of Shechem "entered into the *hold* of their god Berith," and were burnt within it, to the number of "a thousand men and women." Now this hold of their god, to which they had fled as a sanctuary, was near to that tower which was the residence of these thousand persons. Was it not then erected as a tower of defence to the hold or house? So possibly might these round towers in Ireland be built partly for defence of some house or hold of

* P. 172.

their gods nigh at hand, on the site of which sacred buildings for Christian purposes now stand. But let the reader advert to the passage, Judg. ix. 46—49.*

Secondly, they might also subserve the purpose of astronomical observation. The four windows near the top, it appears from Moore and O'Brian, face the four cardinal points of the heavens, and Moore thinks that they were so intended; and for "determining the equinoctial and solstitial times, and thereby regulating the recurrence of religious festivals." He adds, that the Phœnicians themselves constructed their buildings on the same principle; and in the temple of Tyre, where stood the two famous columns dedicated to the wind and to fire, there were also pedestals, we are told, whose four sides, facing the cardinal points, bore sculptured upon them the four figures of the zodiac, by which the position of those points in the heavens is marked. With a similar view to astronomical uses and purposes, the Irish round

* The heathen had houses of their idols. So Scripture teaches us in many places. There was "the house of Dagon," which was "full of men," in which the lords of the Philistines perished by Samson; there was the house of Baal, which "was full from one end to another." See 1 Sam. v. 2; 2 Kings, x. 21. Frequently we read also of the "houses of their idols," and "houses of their high places." What then if we conceive of a house of this kind in these places, and that the tower was built near as a tower of defence, and for the residence of the priests of the house? These houses might have been demolished, and Christian buildings erected, as just observed, upon their site.

towers were, no doubt, constructed; and a strong evidence of their having been used as observatories is, that we find them called by some of the Irish annalists, "celestial indexes." O'Brian seems to be of much the same opinion with Moore. Nor is such a design of these towers improbable.

Thirdly, in the case of invasion of an enemy, they might serve the purpose of "watch-towers," or "strong-holds," such as we read of in that land from whence the Druidical priesthood, and religion, and people came. They might be places from whence they might watch the movements of the enemy. Moore, indeed, objects to this idea, because, says he, they are found in low places, thus "in the deep and secluded valley of Glendalargh stands one of the most interesting, from its romantic position, of all these round towers."* But might not the lowness of the place operate as a reason for, rather than against, such erection? They might also subserve the purpose of a refuge, of a retreat or sanctuary, in times of danger, whether from the invasion of an enemy, or from the pursuit of an avenger of crime. In the latter case the priests, who inhabited them, might admit them for safety, as the manslayer in Israel was admitted into the cities of refuge.

Thus then, we conceive, that they might be erected, secondarily and subordinately indeed, to

* Moore's Ireland, p. 29.

subserve the purposes of astronomical observation and of watching and retreat; but, primarily, for the purpose of religious worship. They might be built by Phœnician settlers in imitation of those towers that they had been accustomed to build in Phœnicia, either to contain the object of worship, or else as the object itself, (for pillar or obelisk worship, and particularly of conic-shaped stones, was common among them.) Or, if this hypothesis be not admitted, we might consider them as towers of defence to the house of their gods adjoining, subserving the purposes also of the residence of their priests, as well as watch-towers, and towers of retreat, or sanctuaries, in times of danger. And here their annual idolatrous festivals might have been held; and, as intimated before, the reason why churches or other religious foundations exist near them might be, that, when Christianity was introduced, it being found that the multitude that had been long accustomed to celebrate their heathen festivals around could not otherwise be brought off from such custom, the Christian teachers concluded on building places for Christian worship on the spot, in accommodation to their long and deeply-rooted prejudices, expecting that time and farther information would root them up. On this hypothesis, may we not also account for the towers that have been usually attached to our ancient churches; three remarkable ones of which kind are to be found at Little Saxham, Hengrove,

and Risby, each of which has a round tower? * The same, in regard to the towers of our churches in common, though they are generally square. The practice, also, of raising spires, and of building churches on hills or high places, as in many instances they have been; might not such practices also originate in a desire of accommodation to heathenish prejudice? "The people have been accustomed to resort thither; the places are held sacred; therefore let us accommodate ourselves to their prejudices." Thus, probably, their teachers reasoned; and hence, possibly, the occasion of these and similar things in different parts of the country.

To the Great Disposer of Events, and the "Father of Mercies," be glory, for the deliverance he has granted us from such heathenish delusions and practices!

* Gent. Mag. Feb. 1838, p. 180.

THE END.

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